



Columbia University  
in the City of New York

THE LIBRARIES



Bequest of  
Frederic Bancroft

1860-1945

100%







JOSEPH WARD  
OF DAKOTA







REV. JOSEPH WARD, D.D.  
Founder and First President of Yankton College

JOSEPH WARD  
OF DAKOTA

BY  
GEORGE HARRISON DURAND



THE PILGRIM PRESS  
BOSTON NEW YORK CHICAGO

W. H. C.  
Copyright, 1913  
BY  
LUTHER H. CARY

1913 H. C.

All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good, shall exist;  
Not its semblance, but itself: no beauty, nor good, nor  
power

Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist  
When eternity affirms the conception of an hour.

The high that proved too high, the heroic for earth too hard,  
The passion that left the ground to lose itself in the sky,  
Are music sent up to God by the lover and the bard:  
Enough that he heard it once; we shall hear it by and by

*Browning:—“Abt Vogler”*



## NOTE ON SOURCES



## NOTE ON SOURCES

---

The Memorial Number of the *Yankton Student*, issued upon the occasion of Dr. Ward's death, gathered together a group of articles on Dr. Ward by those of his contemporaries who were most competent to describe his character and work. These valuable articles have been the basis of much that has been said and written from time to time about Joseph Ward, and they have been freely drawn upon for the present volume. I have been able to bring to bear a large amount of additional material, and have endeavored to present a narrative of his life in due relation to the times in which he lived, particularly the stirring days of the pioneer period in Dakota. It has been my aim to faithfully seek out the facts from every available source, recognizing as I do the historical importance of the subject.

Some of the more important sources of information I wish to mention in this note.

A Report of the Services of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the Church at Perry Centre, N. Y. Volumes of the *Philomathean Mirror*, the student periodical of Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts. Annual Reports of the Association of Congregational Churches of Dakota and South Dakota. Files of the *Yankton Student*, especially the Memorial Number above referred to. Files of the *Yankton Press and Dakotan*, the *Sioux Valley News* (covering the first statehood convention at Canton), the *Monthly South Dakotan*, the *Northwestern Congregationalist*, the *Advance*, the *Congregationalist*, the *Christian Union*, and the *Andover Review* (including the report of the "Great Debate" at Des Moines in 1886). A number of anniversary sermons by Dr. Ward, and other reminiscent sketches by himself and Mrs. Ward on early days in Yankton. An article on "The Mother Church" by Deacon Ephraim Miner in the

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

*Monthly South Dakotan.* Professor W. J. McMurtry's valuable History of Yankton College, particularly chapters covering the founding of the College and the years of Dr. Ward's presidency.

For the account of Dr. Ward's connection with the statehood movement and the educational system of South Dakota I have had much recourse to files of South Dakota newspapers and periodicals as included in the list above given. Other important sources on this topic have been as follows: Doane Robinson's standard work, *A History of South Dakota*. The publications of the State Historical Society, including the volume of Constitutional Debates, and the Memoirs of Gen. W. H. H. Beadle. An article by Gen. Beadle in the *Monthly South Dakotan* on "The Building of the State," and one by Hon. T. H. Coniff on "The Convention which Made the Constitution." The Memoirs of Major Dollard. Reports and official minutes of the statehood and constitutional conventions, and other contemporary documents relating to statehood affairs. Articles in the *Andover Review* by Dr. Joseph Ward on "The Territorial System of the United States," and "Government Aid to Public Education." On this subject of Dr. Ward's connection with public affairs in South Dakota I have had very kind and valuable assistance from Gen. Beadle, Judge Bartlett Tripp, Hon. Doane Robinson, Hon. Ephraim Miner, and others.

A large part of the material of the book has been drawn from sources of a more personal nature; personal letters to the writer, reminiscences and anecdotes, files of old correspondence, and the like. Material of this sort has been contributed by Rev. Dan F. Bradley, D.D., of Cleveland; Rev. De Witt S. Clark, D.D., of Salem, Massachusetts; Dr. Charles M. Sheldon, of Topeka; Rev. James G. Daugherty, D.D., of Kansas City; Professor John T. Shaw, of Oberlin; Burton Payne Gray, Esq., of Boston; Mrs. O. H. Carney, of Los Angeles; Mrs. Ephraim Miner, Hon. George W. Kingsbury, and Major J. R. Hanson, of Yankton; and many others.

Most important of all has been the aid I have received relating to the more intimate facts of Dr. Ward's life from members of his family—Mrs. Ward, Mrs. Ethel Ward Gray,

## NOTE ON SOURCES

and her husband, Mr. Edward Gray. Mrs. Ward, before her death in 1908, was in touch with the project of a biography of her husband, and gave to the beginnings of the work her invaluable assistance and encouragement. Through the friendship and trust of Mrs. Gray and her husband I have had access to all of Dr. Ward's correspondence, diaries, journals, and personal memoranda of every kind. The most precious and sacred part of this store of material, and what has meant more to me for the appreciation of Dr. Ward's life than anything else, has been his letters to Mrs. Ward, and hers to him, written chiefly during his prolonged periods of absence in the interests of the College. The reading of these has been an unspeakable personal privilege. I have dealt with them in the spirit of reverence, quoting from them but sparingly and only when it seemed the one best way to reveal essential facts.

G. H. DURAND.



## CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. PARENTAGE AND BOYHOOD. . . . .	3
II. SCHOOL DAYS—TEACHING AT WELLSVILLE, N. Y.—PIONEERING IN ILLINOIS . . . . .	19
III. PHILLIPS ACADEMY, ANDOVER . . . . .	31
IV. BROWN UNIVERSITY AND ANDOVER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY . . . . .	45
V. COMING TO DAKOTA . . . . .	69
VI. LAYING FOUNDATIONS . . . . .	87
VII. IN YANKTON FROM 1873 TO 1881 . . . . .	109
VIII. THE FOUNDING OF YANKTON COLLEGE	127
IX. THE STRUGGLE FOR STATEHOOD . . . . .	151
X. THE “TESTING” OF THE COLLEGE . . . . .	179
XI. PUTTING LIFE INTO IT . . . . .	211
XII. CONCLUSION . . . . .	235



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FACING  
PAGE

REV. JOSEPH WARD, D.D., Founder and first President of Yankton College	<i>Frontispiece</i>	
THE OLD CAPITOL BUILDING	75	
THE YANKTON ACADEMY, 1872	97	
STEAMBOAT DAYS	110	
THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF YANKTON	121	
BEGINNING OF THE COLLEGE, Rented Building used in 1882-'83	139	
THE FIRST COLLEGE BUILDING, Erected in 1883	144	
MRS. JOSEPH WARD	185	
THE WARD HOME, in Yankton	236	



CHAPTER I  
PARENTAGE AND BOYHOOD



# JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

## CHAPTER I

### PARENTAGE AND BOYHOOD

**J**OSEPH WARD was a Pilgrim of the later day. One could hardly choose a better example of the influence of the New England Pilgrim spirit in the development of the nation than his life and work. His forefathers were of pure New England stock, and the history of the family line, in successive migrations westward, is a record of civilizing power. The first of them, that William Ward who settled at Sudbury, Massachusetts, before 1637, and moved afterwards to Marlboro, farther into the wilderness, was representative in the General Court of the colony, chairman of the selectmen of his town, and deacon of the Marlboro church at its organization. A great grandson of this first William was General Artemus Ward, first commander-in-chief of the Massachusetts forces in the Revolutionary War. In the direct line of Joseph Ward's descent was Jemima Allen, cousin of Col. Ethan Allen, of Vermont. In the successive communities where his forefathers dwelt—at Sudbury, at Marlboro, at New Marlboro on the western slope of the Berkshires, and finally at Perry Centre in the "Genesee Country" of Western New York, where Joseph Ward was born

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

—the Wards were invariably people of consequence. They form a noble succession of strong men—representatives, magistrates, builders of settlements, defenders of liberty, founders of churches and schools. Their record is a type of the victorious progress of Pilgrim civilization from the Atlantic shore westward across the land. And Joseph Ward in his own character and life work, as missionary pastor, educator, and statesman, was true to that noble inheritance. He was alive to this historic significance of his own work in Dakota, and it was an element of his strength. Had he written himself the history of his life, he would have laid emphasis upon his family line, and his inheritance of the spirit and ideals of the Pilgrims.

Dr. Jabez Ward, the father of Joseph, emigrated with others of his kindred from New Marlboro, Massachusetts, to the new “Genessee Country” in Western New York in 1813, settling at a place called Perry Centre. There Joseph Ward was born, May 5, 1838. Soon after the Wards settled at Perry Centre, the Sheldons, who had been neighbors of theirs in New Marlboro and were already connected with the family by marriage, came also, and other New England families. In fact the whole earlier movement into that newly-opened land of promise was composed mostly of settlers from Connecticut and Massachusetts, the region being more accessible to them than to others, lying due west across the Hudson, and up the valley of the Mohawk. So the community at Perry Centre, like many another in the “Genessee

## PARENTAGE AND BOYHOOD

Country," was begun and continued in the faith and manners of the old New England home. They were a people of simple, industrious life, possessed of the patience, the energy, and the thrift to wrest from the wilderness, with ox-teams and primitive farming and with markets far away, a livelihood and increasing competence. Theirs was a life of plain living and high thinking. The toil and privation of pioneering life bred no dullness or coarseness in minds like theirs. Fine ideals of moral and religious culture, a spirit of independent thinking, and an inquisitive, eager, and aspiring frame of mind were to be found in almost every home. Theological controversies were common in those days, and the knotty problems of election and predestination, the doctrine of the Trinity, and the divinity of Christ were familiar matter in sermons, in Sunday School teaching, and in contributions to the weekly newspapers; and the discussion of such questions formed the table-talk in many a household of the community. That kind of thinking, lifeless and impractical as it may seem to-day, was the nourishment which produced the strong minds and great souls of the days gone by.

Joseph Ward's sister Sarah, who has written an account of the theology of the Perry Centre community, tells also of how carefully the usages of their former New England home were maintained. "Some of these customs," she declares, "the strict 'keeping' of Saturday night as the beginning of holy time, the nightly ringing of the curfew, the tolling of the bell on the death of any

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

one in the parish—all these were more punctiliously observed than in many a Massachusetts town.” Above all, they “loved and frequented the house of God.” The little company of pioneers at Perry Centre founded a church the year after their coming, and Ralph Ward, the grandfather, and Jabez Ward, the father of Joseph were original members of it. Jabez Ward was deacon of that church from its beginning in 1814 until his death in 1842. Churchgoing was serious business in those days. They tell of the services being held at first in the log homes of the settlers, then in Deacon Howard’s barn, and after that for a time in the Taylor schoolhouse west of the Centre, and of how Deacon Sheldon, in the struggling days when the church had no “stated supply,” would read one of Dr. Emmons’ strong Calvanistic sermons. They tell how families, including all the children down to the babe in arms, in all weathers, “drawn to church by ox-team, came to stay all day, bringing with them hay for their oxen and dinner for themselves. They had service in the forenoon and in the afternoon, with Sunday School in between.” Prizes were given in Sunday School for committing to memory the greatest number of verses from the Bible, and for a child to recite the whole book of Matthew, it seems, was none too much for the winning of the prize.

Joseph Ward’s father, Dr. Jabez Ward, was a marked character of the community, and he figures largely in the reminiscences of old timers of Perry Centre. He was the “beloved physician” of

## PARENTAGE AND BOYHOOD

the settlement, and a godly man, who ministered to the souls as well as the bodies of his patients. Before coming West he had been licensed to practice by the Connecticut Medical Society, and "approved relative to his knowledge of physic and surgery." The profession of doctor in a country community in those days was no sinecure. Dr. Ward's old faded account book reveals a life of painstaking toil for very meagre returns. After the manner of country doctors he not only prescribed for his patients, but supplied them with medicines laboriously prepared according to old-fashioned pharmacy. These he dispensed at trifling charges. The doctor's fee for ushering a child into the world was three dollars, and the service would frequently involve a journey of twenty miles on horseback at night and in the storm. The settlement of accounts would often be by a cheese, or a quarter of beef, or a load of hay. In his long years of busy practice he never accumulated much earthly treasure. It is recorded that "his views of the sanctity of the Sabbath were such that if he made charges for professional visits on that day, the avails were cast into the treasury of the Lord."

The Perry Centre people were always devoted to the cause of temperance, and Dr. Ward was the chief promoter of a temperance society at that place, which held regular meetings and discussions. A copy is preserved of one of his temperance addresses, which reflects somewhat the pomp and circumstance of old time oratory, yet reveals the force of great earnestness; the Scriptures are

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

his perpetual source of example and metaphor. While Dr. Ward's mind was chiefly practical, and the temperance cause appealed to him on this ground, he was a thinker in theology also, and discoursed and wrote much upon the theological questions of the day. His position was doubtless as orthodox as that of any other pillar of the church; yet he seems to have been a man of more than usual tolerance in such matters. One of the early schoolmasters of the place, who had fallen somewhat under the ban of the church for liberal views in theology and other subjects, turned to Dr. Ward in his trouble and received his friendship and support. The young man proved to be worthy of confidence; soon after he founded a private academy at Perry Centre, where he taught successfully for many years, and in all recollections of the old times his character and ability are held in high esteem.

A pleasant picture of the good Dr. Ward is given by one of the old Perry Centre boys, Dr. E. A. Sheldon, President of the State Normal School at Oswego, N. Y., in a reminiscence, written long after, of the old home church and community.

"Among those (pillars of the church) who made a strong impression on my young life was Dr. Jabez Ward, one of the original organizers of the church. He was our family physician, as he was of nearly all the families in town. He was a man of marked and rare traits of character. He may be justly termed a unique man. His duplicate it would be hard to find. He was a cheerful, and we might almost say a jolly man. His best remedies

## PARENTAGE AND BOYHOOD

for the sick were not to be found in his saddle bags. I cannot say that I ever enjoyed the latter, with its unswallowable pills and picra, but I was willing to endure them for the sake of the visit from one whose presence was such pleasant and wholesome medicine for the soul and body. He cut an odd figure on his old horse as he threw his arms up and down and his heels out and in, as if in frantic effort to wake an animal that appeared to be in a jogging slumber. I am sure that both horse and rider took many naps on the road. So thoroughly was the horse habituated to a certain gait, that any ordinary nap would not in the least interfere with his measured step. The rider often fell from his horse in his sleep, but he was too much of a philosopher ever to be hurt by such falls. He didn't trust to saddle girths. He always went to the ground like a bag of sand and his saddle with him, with no harm to wind or limb. The only harm that ever followed was the trouble of throwing on the saddle and leading the horse to the fence and mounting. His happy repartees made him an agreeable companion to old and young. He was a man of strong affections and deep religious feeling, and his influence for good was felt in every home he visited, as well as in the church which he ever served as an officer."

The story that is told in connection with the last illness of Dr. Ward is characteristic of his whole life of service and sacrifice. He was seized with pneumonia, perhaps the result of exposure on some errand of mercy, and lay upon his sick bed in serious condition. Two young men of the

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

neighborhood were sitting up with him at night, and as the hours dragged on they fell asleep, and slept so well that they did not hear a knock at the door. The sick physician arose and went to answer the knock. It was a messenger for the doctor, some patient of his a mile or so away. The case was urgent; the family were unwilling to risk the new and untried practitioner who had recently come; they wanted "the old doctor" whom they knew. Perhaps Jabez Ward did not appreciate his own danger; at all events the lifelong habit of ready service and the impulse of compassion were strong within him. He left the house, his own watchers still sleeping, attended the case with skill and success (another new child), and returned, the watchers still undisturbed, to his own bed. When they awoke with the morning light their patient was worse. His malady, doubtless aggravated by his midnight escapade, ran a speedy course, and within two days he died.

When this event occurred the boy Joseph was only five years old. In after years he came to feel that it had been a great loss to him not to know more of that father. There were three other children in the family: his older sister, Sarah, who became the wife of the Rev. Stewart Sheldon and the mother of the Rev. Dr. Charles M. Sheldon; an older brother, Butler, who became a prominent banker at Le Roy, not far away; and a younger brother, Cullen, who died early.

The widowed mother had been already for three years a helpless invalid, and so continued until released by death nine years later. She was a

## PARENTAGE AND BOYHOOD

woman of rare character. Her maiden name was Aurilla Tufts. Her ancestors on both sides had been "driven by religious persecutions from Scotland to the North of Ireland, coming from there to New England at an early date." Her family had come from Vermont to the "Genessee Country," settling finally at Perry Centre. It was under the very beautiful influence of this mother that Joseph Ward's character was developed up to his fifteenth year. The very habit of his daily attention to the comfort of the invalid, and of watching over her life of pain and increasing helplessness, bred in him a tenderness and gentleness like a woman's, and thoughtfulness beyond his years. The mother's disease was incurable (heart trouble), and as the weeks and months passed by her lease of life was always precarious. The sense of that perpetual shadow of death, with the solemn thought of the other world so continually near that bedside, must have wrought a deep impression on the mind of the boy. It is not unlikely that the singular experience of these years had much to do with establishing in him that feeling of immortality, always so vivid and clear, which was one of his marked traits.

Sister Sarah, upon whom fell chief responsibility for the care of the mother and the younger children during those years, has told of the companionship between mother and son, and of Joseph's early reading and education under his mother's direction.

"Warm-hearted and affectionate, he became at once," she says, "the most loving and de-

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

voted companion of the sweet and patient invalid, and he was never more happy than when allowed to render her some little service. The bond of sympathy between them was very strong and her wishes were his law. It was very beautiful to see how perfect was the obedience he rendered her, so that to do anything without her permission was almost never thought of. During all those years, until the little boy of five became a lad of fourteen, only one act of disobedience is recalled, and this committed under great temptation, and repented of almost in the doing. Yet so conscientious was the child that he could not rest till he had come with penitent tears to his mother's bedside and accepted the penalty of his wrongdoing.

"It was a very rare degree of wisdom," Sarah continues, "that was given to this mother in her time of need, and her weakness of body only served to quicken her intellectual and spiritual faculties. All household affairs were discussed in 'mother's room,' and all plans for work and play were brought to her for approval. Much of Joseph's reading was done as he sat by her bedside, ready at any moment to drop his book and give the mother needed attention."

This reading, as Sister Sarah has described it, was sufficient in quantity, and supreme in quality—although the world of those days never dreamed of such a flood of juvenile literature as is offered to the boys and girls of our time. Children of that day, having fewer books, read the same one many times, and the spirit of literature certainly thrived in the generations so nourished. Bible reading

## PARENTAGE AND BOYHOOD

and a great deal of it went without saying in every Puritan household. But the Ward's possessed a modest library at home, and there was access to the circulating library of the district school, "well supplied," Sarah relates, "with standard works, solid and substantial. The department of fiction contained 'Robinson Crusoe,' and 'Swiss Family Robinson,' with possibly one or two other volumes of lesser interest and value, but these were first in point of attraction, and they were read and reread as often as they could be caught hold of in their circulating rounds. Josephus' 'History,' taken from this library, was read by Joseph before he was eight years old; and Milton's 'Paradise Lost' and Rollins' 'Histories' he had devoured at that early period. The word 'devoured' is used advisedly, for it was in just this way that he disposed of the mental food that came within his reach. And in remarkable degree, with him, to read a book was to know and remember it. It was in large part this ability to appropriate and retain what he read that gave him in later years so accurate a knowledge of widely different subjects."

In all this period of the boy's awakening intellect the influence of the mother was fine and stimulating. Her own mind had received no great advantages of school training, yet she had inherited and acquired a sweet refinement of thought and manner and an appreciation of poetry, which represents the beauty which was by no means absent at any time from good Puritan homes. She was known in her day for a distinct

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

“literary turn.” She loved to commit her thoughts to paper, whether in letters, or diaries, or, occasionally, in verses done with quaint propriety and taste, and revealing the pure and saintly spirit that was hers. It is said that her letters “read like sermons,” and were “full of piety.” Shortly before her death she made a gift of a purse to her eldest son, Butler, accompanied by the following note of advice, which the family has treasured ever since:

“My dear Son,—

“On presenting you this purse I have two requests to make: first, that you never put into it the avails of dishonest gain; secondly, that you never draw from its resources less or more to expend upon an object which the Word of God and your own conscience cannot approve. Remember you are a steward, and for whatever of this world’s goods are entrusted to your care you will soon be called to account. That the blessing of God may rest upon you is the prayer of

“Your affectionate Mother,

A. W.”

His boyhood training, and especially the influence of his mother, was the foundation of that unaffected refinement and good breeding which made Joseph Ward an agreeable guest in the best of companies, and recognized always as a true gentleman. The saying is preserved of a certain teamster, who used to drive his regular trip through Perry Centre, and was subject to persecution by numerous youngsters along his route.

## PARENTAGE AND BOYHOOD

To the wholesale anathema which he pronounced upon all such, Butler and Joseph Ward were shining exceptions. He "never had no sass from Widow Ward's boys," he said.

There is not lacking Joseph Ward's own testimony as to the exceptional character of his boyhood environment, and what it meant to his after life. "I think of that old home church," he writes, "as one of the most remarkable churches in our country. I got my theology long before I knew there was such a thing as a theological seminary, from my mother first, then from Deacon Howard and Mrs. Skinner in the Sabbath School, then from those who used to come to our house during the interval between the morning and the afternoon services—the two Sheldons, Horace and Eleazer; the Butlers, and others. Then the work done by the same men and women in the Academy and other lines of education is coming to the surface all the time in my work in school and college in South Dakota. . . . I do not know how much I owe to that church and home, for it is a constant revelation to me as I am all the time drawing on that early experience. As long as I live I shall look back there and say it was in Perry Centre that I got all my education that was most helpful."

Dr. Edward Sheldon, already quoted, likewise expressing his appreciation of the Perry Centre of his boyhood, writes: "The Perry Centre church and community have always seemed to me phenomenal. I remember never to have seen there a drunken man, rarely an idle or a shiftless man, or

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

even a profane man or Sabbath-breaker. I have certainly never known a more intelligent and exemplary people."

In such surroundings, where church, and community spirit, and home circumstances all combined to impress the mind of the growing boy with thoughts of duty, and solemn faith, and of the eternities always near, there nevertheless sprang up in him most richly the qualities proper to youth and a pleasant world. The sense of humor, in which he was always delightful, had been born in him and was a marked trait of those years. He was particularly companionable and made friends easily. "A hale fellow, well met," he is declared to have been. The love of poetry, nurtured at his mother's bedside, was an abiding resource throughout his life, the great Milton of his earliest devotion retaining the allegiance of his mature years. As a man he was a genuine lover of nature, and in the days of his youth at Perry Centre could not have been insensible to the charm of the scenes which surrounded him. For this was no rocky wilderness, like the home of the first Pilgrims, but a pleasant region of meadows, orchards, and woods. From Joseph's chamber in the old home at "the Centre" he could look eastward across the gentle slope of the beautiful Genessee valley stretching away for twenty-five miles to the blue hills on the opposite side. That lovely, broad, and inspiring view would be the most familiar daily sight to any one living in the vicinity of Perry Centre, or along the road northward to Leroy.

## CHAPTER II

SCHOOL DAYS—TEACHING AT WELLS-  
VILLE, N. Y.—PIONEERING  
IN ILLINOIS



## CHAPTER II

### SCHOOL DAYS—TEACHING AT WELLSVILLE, N. Y.—PIONEERING IN ILLINOIS

THE education of the children in such a community as Perry Centre, even from the earliest pioneering days, would be most faithfully provided for. Dr. Jabez Ward was himself a school officer of the district, and at all times was zealous in the interests of education for the community. Of Joseph's reading at home, and of the intellectual influence of his mother, some account has already been given. His regular training in the home schools was doubtless of sound quality. Yet his attendance at school was somewhat irregular, owing to the fact that he was rather delicate as a child, and it was often thought best to keep him out of doors instead of in the school room. Apart from the precocity of his home reading, and the remarkable strength of his memory, there was nothing unusual about the growth of his mind, and he himself regarded it as rather slow.

It was at the district school, a mile or so from his home, that Joseph had most of his training up to the time he was fifteen years old. But there was also at Perry Centre an "institute," or acad-

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

emy, privately conducted, and patronized by the principal families of the community, where more advanced training was afforded, equivalent to the beginning of a high school course at the present time. Such academies were common in those days, especially in communities of New England people: there was one also at the neighboring village of Leroy, which Joseph attended part of one year, and a school also of advanced character at Perry Village a few miles from "The Centre." The boy enjoyed the best of these advantages of schooling, even after the old home was broken up by the death of his mother. His uncle, Phicol M. Ward—"Uncle Munro"—who lived near by, took Joseph into his family, administered for him and the other children the slender estate of the mother, and out of his own means aided Joseph for a number of years as he pursued his education. The young man worked for his uncle and for neighboring farmers during vacations and at odd times, earning what he could himself for carrying on his schooling. He received help also from time to time from his brother, Butler, who had soon established himself in business and was master of some income. This generosity on the part of the family was a mark of their recognition of promise in the youth, and the outcome proved that they invested wisely.

The clearest impression of Joseph Ward in these school days is gained from a letter from Mr. E. D. C. McKay, one of the schoolmasters at Perry Centre, written long afterward to Mrs. Ward. McKay was the teacher who gave the young man his

## SCHOOL DAYS

first impulse toward a college education, and Joseph Ward always spoke of him with high appreciation. The letter is as follows:

"Thirty years ago, when I, a boy of seventeen, was teaching the district school in the old 'White School House' a mile east of Perry Centre, New York, Joseph Ward was a pupil there, walking a mile and a half daily to school. The next winter he attended a school that I taught at Perry Centre.\* Considered altogether, his intellectual make-up, his tone and elevation of character and breadth and soundness of judgment, he was the strongest and most promising young man I ever met. In the long stretch of years since then, among all the young men—some thousands—I have observed in college and elsewhere, reckoning him on the broadest and clearest lines that point to high usefulness and value as a man, I certainly have known very few who would rank with him. I suppose his career attests the correctness of my early and permanent estimate of him. I labored hard and often with him to overcome his doubts as to taking a college course, and he touched me deeply some years since when he told me that to 'Uncle Sam' of Phillips Academy, and to me he was more indebted for what he was than to all others put together. I can see that I influenced him considerably in many ways, and in the matter of a college course, but what he was and what he became was in him. I always felt sure that he must have had a rare father and mother. I have written of him as I knew him in

\*The Institute above referred to.

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

his youth and young manhood. No one who ever saw him for a moment could well fail to be impressed as I was."

During these terms at Perry Centre Institute, at Leroy, and at Perry Village school, he secured a groundwork in History, Latin, and Mathematics, together with some start in German. Latin was always a favorite study with him, and he developed eventually into something of a Latin scholar. Mathematics were less to his liking, and the problems were tough discipline for his will. In debating society at the Perry school he once argued for the affirmative of the question, "Resolved: that a classical education is more beneficial than a mathematical." From references in his letters and diaries to great toil and distress over his mathematics it may be inferred that he upheld his ease in this debate with much fervor. Now and then from his slender purse he purchased books for general reading, among them about this time a copy of the works of Shakespeare, which he read with great delight. Shakespeare, and in fact English literature in general, had scarcely any place in the secondary school curriculum of those days. Perhaps the study of the works of Shakespeare, as being stage plays, would even have been frowned upon in a strict Puritan community like Perry Centre. At all events, it seems that the same liberal-minded early school master of the place, of whom mention has already been made,\* felt moved to write a "treatise on rhetorical instruction, and in it

\*Page 8.

## SCHOOL DAYS

take occasion to vindicate such authors as Shakespeare and other dramatic writers." This excellent project was not carried out, however, for he presently made the discovery that Dr. Johnson and Coleridge had already written in defense of Shakespeare and the dramatists, and in a more able manner than he could hope to do it, and therefore concluded that "the best way henceforth would be to refer those who are disposed to cavil on the subject of the drama to those and other great and good men who have written in its favor."

So the boy Joseph read the plays of Shakespeare, whether encountering "cavil" it is not recorded, but the fact is a good sign. He had the strength of the Puritan nature without its severity. His soul was open to the "humanities" always; and the deep springs of human nature, and beauty, and imagination, and humor, continued fresh and unspoiled in him throughout manhood's work.

Yet, though the growth of his mind was toward broad and kindly ways of thinking, let it not be supposed that specific weeds of heresy had any chance to spring up in him, trained as he was from infancy on solid New England doctrine. He used to have lively discussions in Bible class with a certain teacher who, it seems, was prone to follow unsound ways of thinking. He writes it down in his diary on one occasion that "Mr. S. does not believe in total depravity, yet will not be convinced by any amount of argument." In fact, so hopelessly perverted was the mind of this

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

teacher on some of these fundamental points that Joseph was disposed at one time to quit the class, "having been favored long enough with the instructions of Mr. S."

During his attendance at the academy at Leroy, when he was in his eighteenth year, he became converted in a series of revival meetings held in the Presbyterian church of that place. Although he had been reared in a Christian home, and the whole bent of his training had been toward religious belief, nevertheless this event marked an epoch in his life. Henceforth he became a "dedicated spirit." Joseph Ward always believed in conversion: first in his own; then in the conversion of others. In his long years of preaching he aimed at converting people, and did so. Relatives at Leroy were deeply impressed with what he said one time at a prayer meeting there, on the occasion of a visit during his later years, referring most affectingly to his conversion in that church so many years before. That solemn hour he held sacred in his memory, as he did also the hour when he joined the little church at Perry Centre not long after, on the Sunday before he was eighteen.

He had received from McKay a strong impulse toward a college education, and in all likelihood was thinking now of the ministry as a life work; but circumstances were not favorable at this time, and decision on that question was deferred. His sister Sarah was now married to the Rev. Stewart Sheldon, and they had gone to Wellsville, N. Y., where Mr. Sheldon had his first pas-

## SCHOOL DAYS

torate. Thither Joseph followed them, and started a private school at that village. He records in his diary how he had seventy-five hand-bills printed announcing his school, and distributed them himself to the people of the town. As the result of his advertising he secured four pupils for the opening day, which number was increased to eighteen in the course of the year. After one month's experience as a pedagogue he comes to the conclusion that "teaching is *hard work*. It is tiresome to repeat one thing for the hundredth time, and then not be understood. I wish scholars would think more seriously." He was instinctively reluctant to resort to the rod, yet it appears that he was obliged to do so more than once, particularly in the case of one "uneasy boy."

This was Joseph Ward's first experience as an educator. There was probably not much encouragement and still less profit in this maiden effort, and early in the spring, having brought his school to a close, he embarked upon a venture of quite different sort.

He and his brother Butler the year before had taken a half section of land, out West, near Monee, Illinois, and Joseph now betook himself thither to try his hand at farming. He spent there a hard, tedious, and discouraging year. He built him a little house and lived there alone. With an ox-team he broke up the prairie sod, planted corn and beans and tended them through the hot summer, toiled for many weeks building a fence and digging a well, in the meanwhile caring

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

for a few head of cattle—all this manifestly with no spark of enthusiasm and with heavy groanings of spirit. He was soon convinced that he was not cut out for a farmer. It appears that he did not even have physical strength for it, and was sick often from strain of work. Large-framed though he was, Ward was not always of quite robust physique. The lonely evenings he spent in reading and study. Many an hour of the long Sundays he would spend with a book in hand, watching the cattle to keep them out of the corn; but his mind was too much on the book, and the cattle “bothered him.” He seems to have had in view the continuation of his education, although the way was not then clear, and he could not yet decide on his particular line of future work. He studied surveying, and through the winter had more or less employment in that line. He read Blackstone, and seems to have thought some of taking up the law. Uncertainty preyed upon his mind as the year wore on.

Still there were happier circumstances to relieve the hardship and discouragement of that long year. He enjoyed visiting at the home of Butler, who was now living at Rockford, Illinois. The hours he spent in their home—the reading aloud, and the talk, and the games of chess—were always bright memories in Butler’s family. Then in the little pioneer settlement at Monee he soon became interested in his neighbors and in what was going on. Town meeting and election, debating club, temperance society, Sunday School, of which he was chosen superintendent—in all

## SCHOOL DAYS

these affairs he had a hand, playing the part in small of building up a new country which he was destined to play on a larger scale in Dakota later on.

The next spring he succeeded in renting the farm, to his great relief, and by July he was able to wind up his affairs at Monee, say farewell to his friends there, and start back for his old home in New York. On through the summer he did much reading and visited with old friends, but not till toward fall did he get the question settled of what he was going to do. While he was at Wellsville visiting Sister Sarah and her family, his old teacher, McKay, came there to see him, which may have aided him in arriving at a decision. At all events by the first of September the die is cast, and he sets out for the East to become a student at Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts.



CHAPTER III  
PHILLIPS ACADEMY, ANDOVER



## CHAPTER III

### PHILLIPS ACADEMY, ANDOVER

HAVING decided upon the ministry as his life work, Joseph Ward now entered upon a period of study, eleven years in all, in academy, college, and seminary, to prepare himself for that calling. Destined to become a standard-bearer of New England civilization at the West, he received this course of education in New England schools. For his preparatory training nothing could have been more favorable than his choice of Phillips Academy, Andover, Massachusetts. It was the oldest, largest, and most distinguished of the preparatory schools of New England, an institution of splendid traditions, and an honored alumni roll of poets, patriots, teachers, preachers, and missionaries since its foundation. The period of Joseph Ward's course, from 1857 to 1861, was an inspiring time in the history of the school. The classics were still in full bloom there, the main constituent in the course of study, and their idealizing influence was manifest in the developing characters of the students of that day. One receives the impression, in reading accounts of the Academy at that time, of a company of young idealists, looking forth from

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

an atmosphere all radiant with faith and courage upon a world they meant to conquer. One sees, for example, with what spirit of idealism they studied history, nourishing the mind with lofty conceptions of political liberty and heroic leadership. It is no wonder that, as the great struggle of the Civil War drew on, the old Massachusetts academy became a hotbed of patriotic enthusiasm. The inspiring eloquence of Wendell Phillips and Edward Everett was heard by the Andover boys in the days when Ward was there, and struck the answering chord in their hearts. Those times, too, were the period of our greatest American literature, and Boston near by was the centre of the literary movement. Young men of the Academy caught the literary spirit, as well as the spirit of the New England orators, and not a few were kindled with ambition for the career of letters.

Moreover, Ward's years at Phillips fell happily in those palmy days of the reign of Dr. Samuel Harvey Taylor as principal, "the Arnold of America," as he has been called, a great classical scholar, and probably the most famous schoolmaster of his time. During his long administration as principal of the Academy he was beloved and feared by all the boys at Phillips, and always was known among them by the name of "Uncle Sam." To him as a teacher Joseph Ward believed that he owed more than to any other man, unless it was the McKay of the school at Perry Centre.

So extraordinary was the personality and

## PHILLIPS ACADEMY

influence of this great teacher that we may dwell for a moment upon some of the numerous reminiscences that have been published regarding him. Of his dominating influence over the Academy one writer says: "He (Uncle Sam) appeared in a measure indifferent to the methods of teaching or the capability of teachers in the school for the first years of a boy's life. Under-teachers were repeatedly changed during his administration, and he relied with confidence upon the power which he possessed to take boys in the final year of their course and make genuine scholars of them." "I can remember," writes another, "how we sat for an hour and three-quarters many a time, and dwelt with real interest and entertainment during all that time over five lines of the Aeneid or over two lines of the Iliad . . . He taught Latin and Greek it seemed to me as no one had ever taught it before, or ever would again. How intent and earnest was he as he took up the first line of Homer with all the freshness and curiosity of a seeker after new light, as if he had not gone wearisomely over and over it again, now for the thousandth time! How lovingly he took it up, syllable by syllable and word by word, tending each word as carefully as a sweet babe, turning it one side and another with sweet affection, warning us of the curious beauty of its interpretation, the fine philosophy of its derivation, the wise peculiarity of its composition, its singular increment, its unique terminal ending, its quaint and apt office in its place, and the happy burden of its meaning! . . . The room in which

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

he held his class, Number Nine, was a daily battleground. There were no superfluous words in his questions. Each was delivered as if stripped for the fight. There was no pause for guessing answer and no prompting by insinuating question. . . . The boys came out, those who were in earnest—and it was rare that all were not caught in the contagion of his earnestness—flushed and eager, quickened by the contest, and excited to new effort."

In his morning prayer at chapel he often said: "O Lord, give to the students of this Academy retentive memories."

"For more than a generation he was autocrat of Phillips and emperor of Andover. His reign was in no way a limited monarchy, it was absolute. . . . Dr. Taylor always wore black broadcloth clothes, the coat cut with swallow-tails like the modern evening coat, a turn-down Byron collar and a neck handkerchief of black silk or satin. . . . In cold weather he usually wore on the street a dark blue cloak of ample dimensions with a collar of black velvet, and a tall silk hat then commonly called a stove-pipe. To see and meet Dr. Taylor and Professor Park, a tall and most distinguished looking man, the reverend and venerated head of the theological seminary, walking together on the streets of Andover was something to be remembered—Andover's two most distinguished citizens. As they passed every hat was doffed, and they always graciously returned this recognition and mark of respect by lifting their own hats in response."

## PHILLIPS ACADEMY

It was at Phillips Academy under "Uncle Sam," rather than later in his college course, that Ward's own character as a student was formed, and his ideal of high quality in scholarship was established. By nature he was diligent in his studies; to him the nearest and clearest duty was to acquire knowledge. Yet he was never brilliant as a scholar, and the medium grades which he received, recorded in self-admonishment in his diary from week to week, were the source of no little discouragement. Yet it is clear that at that time and always he had the faculty of assimilating what he got from books into the genuine and permanent wisdom of the mind. Greek was a struggle for him, yet he loved it with increasing devotion, and to have made a "rush" in a Greek recitation under "Uncle Sam," as he now and then succeeded in doing, was a source of keenest pleasure. Writing in after years of his memory of the class in Greek at Phillips under Dr. Taylor, he said: "It was one of the pleasures of our preparatory course to hear our principal, the second if not the first Greek scholar in America, repeat occasional passages from Homer's *Iliad*. We could hear the multitudinous roar of the many-sounding sea, the dreadful clanging of Apollo's silver bow—though it seems little less than sacrilege to attempt in stiff English a rendering of Homer's *πολυφλόισβοιο θαλασσης*." In Latin, his favorite study in the former home schools, Ward did become the first scholar in his class at Phillips, and was elected by the students and principal to one of the six high "honors" at the anni-

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

versary "Exhibition," where he delivered the Latin Oration.

Like many another boy at Andover Joseph Ward had to earn part of his school expenses. The usual thing was sawing wood. The boys were wont to work in pairs, wielding the swift cross-cut, and doubtless many a lifelong friendship was there sealed, at some professor's woodpile, by drops of sweat that mingled together in the sawdust. One of the boys whom Ward became acquainted with in this partnership of toil, forming a lasting friendship, was James Brand, afterward the distinguished minister of the First Congregational church at Oberlin. But Ward found other means of eking out expenses, probably more lucrative than the buck and saw. "We were living," writes Professor Churchill, "in the days of boarding clubs managed by the students themselves as one of the means of self-help. The largest of these clubs unanimously elected Ward as steward; and right well he carried the club through the peculiar difficulties of providing for five-and-twenty hungry, whimsical young fellows, ever ready to find fault with what did not exactly suit their fastidious tastes; but his imperturbable good nature, his tact, patience, economy, and knowledge of schoolboy gastronomics, won from us our cordial praise, and secured his frequent re-election to the stewardship."\*

Ward soon made his place as one of the strong men in the famous Philomathean Literary Society

\*This and following passages are from the Memorial Number of "The Yankton Student."

## PHILLIPS ACADEMY

of the Academy, and was chosen to some of its most responsible offices. He frequently took the floor in debate. His style of speaking was clear, sensible, and weighty, and he often writes in his diary of having "gained his case." Professor Churchill tells how school politics centered in and proceeded from the election of officers of "Philo." "Never have I witnesssed," he says, "intenser political rivalry, never have I seen the tactics, the enthusiasm, the conflicts that pertain to heated party politics more actively displayed than in the 'Philo' elections of '60 and '61. Ward was no half-hearted neutral; he was ever found squarely planted upon the side that seemed to him to represent the best measures through the best methods, and in the best men. This initiative political training-ground helped to equip many a man who afterward became eminent in the politics and the councils of State and Nation."

The highest honor in the gift of the Society was the editorship of the "Philomathean Mirror." To this Ward was in due time elected. It was a remarkable periodical. Its wisdom may have been somewhat "top heavy," yet if one would catch the splendid spirit of the Phillips Academy of that day, one has but to turn the leaves of an old volume of the "Philomathean Mirror." Its pages fairly glow with the enthusiasm of youth, with great ideals of life's work, and with a patriotism that thrills like a prophecy.

Ward identified himself from the beginning with the religious interests of the school, in which he soon bore a leading part. Professor Churchill

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

had his first impression of Ward at a class prayer meeting, which he describes as follows: "It was not strange that, when he took his place as leader of the first class prayer meeting of the United Divisions of the Middle Class at the opening of the new academic year, every classmate turned toward him with respectful attention. The eye was first attracted by his unusual height, by the maturity of his appearance, the modesty and manliness of his bearing, and the kindness of his expression; the ear was charmed by his gentle tones as he reverently read the Scripture, and led us in prayer with the intimate cadence of one accustomed to communion with his Father; when he spoke to us out of his personal experience, and his knowledge of the religious needs of school life, there was a blending of diffidence and self-possession that won the listener's sympathy and confidence. He spoke briefly, to the point, in an unpretentious way, but yet with such a quiet strength and authority that I felt he was not only the leader of that prayer meeting, but one of the leaders of the school. And so indeed he was."

Ward was an active worker in the Society of Inquiry, a student organization for the study of missionary subjects and the promotion of religious life among the students and in due time was chosen as its president. In neighborhood mission work carried on by the students of the Academy he bore a large share, chiefly in connection with a mission Sunday School in Abbott village near by, established for factory children,

## PHILLIPS ACADEMY

and regularly in charge of Phillips students. He began as teacher and afterward became superintendent of the school. He tells in his diary of his custom of holding a five-minute meeting for prayer with his teachers just before beginning the session of the school, and of its visible effect upon the work of the hour—even upon the conduct of a class of unruly boys. His supreme object in religious work, then and always, was simply and directly to win souls to the religion of Christ. In a quiet, natural way he became a marked force in personal evangelism among his fellow students, and was one of a small group of men, an inner circle of religious spirits, who met and prayed together, and planned and labored for the deepening of the religious life of the Academy. In this he was respected by all who knew him. There was not a particle of cant in his make-up. He went about his work with that same sincerity and winning friendliness that characterized all his intercourse with men in later life. “The sympathy of his society,” says Professor Churchill, “was genial, wise, and helpful. He was naturally the recipient of many confidences. The erring and the sinful were sure of his tenderness and firmness; the discouraged struggler with himself or his task found a way out with Ward for a guide; and more than one broken-hearted young lover found consolation and direction in this wise-hearted friend. Many a sentimental Pendennis looked to him as his Warrington; many a headstrong Tom Brown made him his Hardy. I say of Ward, as Carlyle said of the dear friend of his

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

youth, Edward Irving—"He was the brotherliest man I ever know."

With all his high seriousness of purpose, Ward was one of the heartiest and most active of good fellows in all the fun and athletic sports of the school. He was fond of a social evening with two or three of his friends, and at such times of relaxation he was full of gayety and good stories. He was vigorous and active in all the forms of athletics and manly exercises in the school. Football was his favorite game. He says in his diary, with an air of confession, that he sometimes became "greatly excited," yet he always bore the reputation of "playing fair," and was the one most often chosen as umpire of disputed points. He represented his class as one of the regular committee whose business it was to keep order on the athletic grounds. Baseball, hare-and-hounds (adopted from one of Ward's favorite books, "Tom Brown at Rugby"), and long-distance country runs were sports that he delighted in. He was member of a volunteer fire company that at one time in Ward's day was called to active service at a great factory fire at Lawrence. The captain of that company was no less a personage than "Uncle Sam" himself, and many a boy retains in his memory the picture of that great teacher and stern master running with the machine in the ardor of his enthusiasm. Ward was also member of that military company known as the "Phillips Guards," which just before the outbreak of the Civil War afforded expression for the martial spirit of the Academy boys, at a time

## PHILLIPS ACADEMY

when Dr. Taylor and the other teachers had all they could do to restrain their pupils from leaving school and enlisting. Ward was chosen lieutenant-commander of the division made up of the tallest and largest men in school.

Out door sports and pleasures of less strenuous nature he also took part in with great delight. In wintertime there was famous coasting down the long hill of Andover, and skating parties at Pomp's Pond, where sometimes a hundred would be on the ice at once—including sober "theologs" of the Seminary, perennial butt of Academy jesting, and demure maidens from the Abbott School—the "nuns" of school parlance, objects of cautious gallantry and restrained admiration. In summer there was fine swimming at Haggett's Pond, and in the spring and autumn long, delightful walks over the hills or down the river perhaps as far as Haverhill. To go walking with a friend or two—that was always great happiness to him. "It was a rare delight," says Churchill, "to share his enthusiasm for nature." Haggett's Pond, and "glorious" Sunset Rock, and Prospect Hill were favorite objective points—the latter with its magnificent view of Mount Monadnock, and Salem, and Bunker Hill Monument, and ships visible on the distant sea.

There was one vacation at the close of his junior year at Phillips, spent with his friend, John Allen, and a jolly group of young people at Marion, on Buzzard's Bay, that was a particularly bright memory. Upon his return he contributed to the "Philomathean Mirror" his "Reminis-

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

ences" of the sports and adventures of that occasion, in the form of a burlesque in Hiawathian verse, which was highly entertaining to the persons concerned, as well as to the student public at Phillips.

Ward always retained a remarkable fund of boyish spirits and a zest for a merry time. In his later years, which were so weighted down with toil and trouble, he had his recourse now and then to lighter hours in company with the young and the young hearted, when it seemed as if care took wings and left him free. Members of his own family and friends who knew him best like to recall this trait and are aware that it was one of the sources of his strength.

## CHAPTER IV

### BROWN UNIVERSITY AND ANDOVER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



## CHAPTER IV

### BROWN UNIVERSITY AND ANDOVER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

WARD graduated from Phillips Academy in 1861, and in the following fall matriculated at Brown University, Providence, Rhode Island. In his choice of Brown for his college course he was influenced in part by the fact that Sister Sarah and her husband, the Rev. Stewart Sheldon, were now living at Central Falls, a manufacturing town a few miles out from Providence, and they invited him to live with them while attending the University. But furthermore Brown was a favorite institution for Phillips Academy graduates, and Ward had the advantage there of companionship with a number of his Academy classmates and friends.

The War had begun. Many a beginning class in the colleges of New England might soon be marching under the stars-and-stripes in place of college colors. The time was full of excitement. No one could tell what the morrow might bring forth. Nevertheless Ward entered upon his work with steady mind, and purpose to make the most for the present of the opportunity before him.

None of the teachers at Brown University exercised an influence over his mind equal to that of

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

“Uncle Sam” at Phillips Academy, and upon becoming acquainted with the less exacting ways of class work at the University he looked back with particular satisfaction upon the mental discipline he had gained in his preparatory course. He appreciated, however, the men under whose instruction he now came—a group of really eminent teachers, whose names are still remembered in the field of education. Barnas Sears, the president, was a scholar of the newer school, fresh from the influence of German universities, and eager to bring to bear the scholarship and advanced thought of Germany upon the advancing thought of his own country. Whether Ward’s mind at this time was influenced by any tendency to liberal thinking under the leadership of Barnas Sears at Brown does not appear, but certain it is that soon after at Andover Seminary he was influenced somewhat in that direction, and with important consequences at a later time in his life. Ward’s teacher in Latin and Greek at the University was Albert Harkness, whose Latin Grammar afterward became familiar to every school boy in the land. His teacher in mathematics was another noted educator, S. S. Greene, best known, however, for his textbook on English grammar. Ward thought very highly of him, not only for his mastery of his subject, but for his thorough methods of teaching, and his genial kindness and dignity of character. John L. Lincoln, afterwards widely known for his scholarly editions of Livy and Horace, was Ward’s teacher in the advanced study of Latin, optional

## BROWN UNIVERSITY

in the course, which Ward elected. Another teacher whom Ward appreciated and particularly enjoyed was Robinson P. Dunn, the professor of logic and rhetoric, an exact and elegant scholar, who made his mark in the world of letters. Professor Dunn was a man who had the "note of urbanity." It was said of him that he "realized a type of scholarship but seldom witnessed in this country. He resembled rather the fine products of the English universities, those ancient seats whose centuries of refinement soften the very air that sighs through their dreamy quadrangles." It is evident that Ward, in these student days, had that sense of quality and refinement in the cultivated mind, which was afterward a distinct element in his ideal of education as founder of a Western college.

But along with his mathematics, and Greek, and logic, and other learning, another and very important subject took possession of Ward's mind in the first year of his course at Brown. In a word, he fell in love with the lady who afterwards became his wife, Miss Sarah Frances Wood, of Central Falls, Rhode Island. For Joseph Ward this single love of his youth proved to be "the true Promethean fire," a gift indeed from heaven which wonderfully inspired his life henceforth.

It was this new experience of his college days which seems to have called forth such sentiments as the following, which are taken from the manuscript of a speech or toast written apparently for some fraternity occasion:

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

“It is not possible for us to cherish in our inmost heart a longing for any good without being influenced by it. We will find our lives gradually shaping according to the outline of our dream.

“Tennyson was not the only man who has had a dream of fair women. We do the same each day we live, only with this difference, that while he dreamed and sang of Helen and Iphegenia, of Cleopatra and Rosamond, we dream of Marys and Kates and Susans and Janes, whom we meet every day and sing about in a humbler strain than he, but none the less earnest and true, we trust. They surprise us by peeping from the page of Herodotus; or when we read of Briseis with our lips, our hearts keep repeating some other name, dearer to us we think than was hers to Agamemnon. They interfere at times with our clear understanding of Sine and Tangent. . . . We look at them far above and strive to make ourselves more worthy to reach them and stand beside them in their purity.

“Are we not made better by such dreams as these?”

Sarah Wood was the daughter of one of the first families of the place, and had been reared in a home of wealth, refinement, and religious culture. Her father, the Hon. Joseph Wood, had been for many years engaged in the cotton manufacturing business at Central Falls, along the river. He was a man widely recognized for ability and integrity of character. He had repeatedly declined to accept official honors, but at

## BROWN UNIVERSITY

length consented to accept the nomination for the state Senate, and was elected by the unanimous vote of both parties. Mr. Wood was for twenty-five years superintendent of the Sunday School in the church of which Stewart Sheldon was now pastor, and Joseph Ward about this time became a teacher in the Sunday School.

In this way the Sheldons and the Woods were closely associated with each other, and the indications are that both sides looked with favor upon the prospect of a match between the young people. Ward, it seems, had fallen in love with Sarah Wood at first sight, while she, at first, was by no means favorably impressed with him, particularly with his person, which she considered very homely. It was, in fact, only after a somewhat extended courtship that he was able to win her. Jottings in his diary at this period give some hint of the prim, old-fashioned circumstances of his courting, as he mingled in the society of the young people of the parish. There was the "Sewing Circle" of the church, at which the ladies met in the afternoon, and the gentlemen attended in the evening "to entertain the ladies," and perchance to make themselves useful by "holding the yarn." There was the "Reading Circle" of the parish, at which the young people gathered to read aloud improving literature, such as "Littell's Living Age," which proceeding, though it may have grown heavy for sprightly young blood, was rewarded by the pleasure of the walk home in the evening, while "the moon would be shining,"

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

as Joseph once remarks, "regardless of all expense." There were teas, and church socials, and maple sugar parties, and concerts, and all such affairs, at which the young people of the parish came together and had their good times; and in the out-of-door season, picnic parties and drives and all that. Especially delightful, it would seem, were certain "Maying parties" that spring by some of the young people of Joseph's circle. In the early season of the flowers once, when his cousin Eliza and Sarah Wood had gone "a-Maying," he writes in his diary of receiving "a bouquet of trailing arbutus, which was very acceptable; many of the buds have opened since last night and now it looks very pretty." One of these woodland pilgrimages he records with particular fondness—"the most happy day I have passed for many months. We had a cosy little Maying party consisting of Sarah Wood, Ruth Wood, Eliza and myself: we went down to the Valley Falls woods (by way of the Smithfield Pike) and spent about three hours in rambling about, picking Mayflowers and mosses. While Miss Sarah Wood was making the flowers into a wreath for Miss Tracy, whom we had chosen as Queen of the May, I employed myself in making whistles and tops, the former from a chestnut tree under which we sat, and the latter from acorns and splinters from 'the stump.'

"We came home by the Valley Pike, and as Eliza and Sarah [Sister Sarah] had an invitation to take tea at Mr. Wood's, we went there at once and remained until meeting-time. During the

## BROWN UNIVERSITY

meeting I was exceedingly sleepy, as were also others of the Maying party: Miss Wood, Eliza and I went home with Miss Tracy, and the crown was given her by Miss Wood.

“Such was my first ‘May Day,’ much happier than I expected, and for it God be thanked.”

But this happy time of love-making, as hinted in Joseph’s diary for these months, was now sternly interrupted by the call to arms in the service of the Union. It was soon after that idyllic “May Day” that the war spirit at Brown, already tense and eager, reached its highest pitch of excitement. “It was not possible,” writes Daugherty, Ward’s classmate and friend, “to give undivided attention to any subject of thought. In Brown it was not required in those days. The teachers were not less interested in the saving of the nation than were their former pupils who were then daily dying to save the nation. George William Curtis, a foster son, speaking in 1864 at the centennial of the University, pictured vividly the college as it was seen in War days. ‘Hope College and University Hall are each barracks four stories high, crowded with sons of liberty; Manning and Rhode Island Halls are not only schools of learning, but hospitals for thorough cure of lame loyalty and paralytic patriotism.’ There came an hour when these ‘sons of liberty’ could not remain in barracks. It was in the month of May, ’62. To those eager for the hourly bulletins from the army came the news that our forces were in full retreat and Washington was in peril. It seemed the crisis. No one knew but

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

it meant the triumph of secession. No Brown boy cared to live longer if it did. The barracks were emptied. As the Tenth Rhode Island was hurrying through New York City on the way to the front, some one asked whether all the high schools in Rhode Island had enlisted. Joseph Ward was carrying a musket in Company D, about to take a course not laid down in the college catalog, yet within the years of the college course."\*

The Tenth Rhode Island was in service that summer in the vicinity of Washington, engaged to garrison seven forts and batteries surrounding the city. Ward's company, the greater part of the time, was stationed at one of these defenses six miles from the city. While here, he was stricken down with a dangerous sickness which nearly cost him his life. His own brief account of the experience set down in his diary after he left his sick-bed and returned home is as follows:

"Toward the last of July I was taken with fever; on the first day of August was removed to the hospital; there I was more comfortable, but my fever increased . . . and made me very weak for a time. Dr. Wilcox despaired of my life, but God spared me. Through the influence of Daugherty, who was with me all the time, I was taken from the hospital on the 18th of August and carried to a private house, Mr. Lightfoot's; there I was attended by the members of the family, who were all very kind to me. But my chief nurse was Daugherty, who was with me

\*Memorial Number of "The Yankton Student."

## BROWN UNIVERSITY

night and day almost without intermission. He brought my food, prepared my medicines, and wrote daily almost to Sarah [Mrs. Sheldon] giving an account of my progress. He kept me from exerting myself too soon or too much, and was very prudent and careful. More than all, as I was not able to go home with the regiment, he got permission from the Colonel to stay with me. The regiment left the 26th of August and I could not go till the 4th of September."

Daugherty's letters home to Sister Sarah, which have been affectionately preserved to the present time through her hands and his, reveal the beautiful and devoted service of that faithful, lifelong friend. Always afterward in referring to that army sickness Ward would say that it was Daugherty who saved his life.

After those months of debilitating sickness, re-enlistment was out of the question. The effects of it remained for a long time, and in fact never entirely left him. After a protracted period of convalescence he was able, though with weariness and difficulty, to resume his university study. Through that year and the two following we find him taking part again in the social affairs of the young people of the parish at Central Falls, and evidently pursuing his courtship of Sarah Wood. It may be that like Desdemona "she loved him for the dangers he had passed," but however that was, the particular decisive question was never asked and answered till more than a year after his return from military service. January 18, 1864, was the precise date of his proposal and

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

acceptance—as evidenced by a letter which he wrote to her on the anniversary of their troth-plight twenty-five years afterward, recalling with a lover's enthusiasm the circumstances of that momentous event.

"You and I walked down Clay Street together from Mr. Stearns', and I said the words that had been burning in my heart for three years. It seems to me like yesterday—the bridge, the rain, the umbrella, and my trip-hammer heart. 'I'll do it before I set foot on the bridge.' And I did it—and won!"

But in the meantime, while his heart was thus filled with the dreams of a lover, the spirit of patriotism, crossed as it had been by the attack of sickness, was not to be denied some form of expression in service for his country. During the summer vacation of '63, again in '64, and for a short time in the spring of '65, Ward enlisted as a "delegate" in the work of the United States Christian Commission, a religious philanthropic organization for aiding in the care of the sick and wounded on battlefield and in hospital, and supplementing the work of army chaplains in their ministrations to the men of their charge. The work of this society was extensive in scope, and deeply appreciated by officers and soldiers as well as by the country at large, especially in those times of agony and confusion following some great battle, when the utmost endeavors of surgeons, hospital stewards, and chaplains were desperately unequal to the demands made upon them.

## BROWN UNIVERSITY

For this labor of love and mercy Ward was especially qualified. From boyhood days when he watched by his mother's bedside, and throughout his life, he was remembered for his power of sympathy and for a gentleness of voice and manner in ministering to the sick like that of a woman. Moreover he possessed tact, and common sense, and an executive ability which fitted him for performing successfully the trying duties of this army service. At Hagerstown, Maryland, and vicinity, in the track of Lee's retreat from Gettysburg, where he was stationed in July and August, '63, after the awful carnage of that battle, he soon was made chief of the hospital work of the Commission, with charge of quantities of supplies and various important responsibilities. The following summer of '64, first in the defenses around Washington, and afterward at City Point, Virginia, Grant's headquarters in his operations before Richmond, Ward continued in the service of the Christian Commission, at the latter station being appointed captain of the delegates for the second army corps, with supervision over large work in hospital and field.

Some impression of the character of this experience may be obtained from a few extracts from his journal and notebooks:

“Chambersburg, Pa., July 15, 1863.

“Got acquainted with a soldier by holding his ‘dorg.’ He rewarded me by showing me the pup’s teeth and seemed to think that he had put me under great obligations: but better than that

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

he asked me for a testament, and as I had none very gladly took a small prayer book."

"Hagerstown, Md., July 19, 1863.

"Spent the whole day in unpacking the stores, delivering them to the surgeons, and carrying them to the sick in the different hospitals. Had a little altercation with a rebel surgeon, who came asking for brandy and waxed wroth at not receiving it."

"The Same, July 21, 1863.

"Spent a large part of the day in talking with the men and writing letters for them. Wrote seven and furnished material for a dozen more, so that I had quite a mail. The boys nearly all want me to write to their mother, and they also charge me not to let her know how badly they are wounded."

"The Same, Aug. 1, 1863.

"One of the patients, Miran Judy, died Thursday morning. His father came the night before and was with him till he died. I got a coffin for him and transportation to Chambersburg. Have been to the rebel hospital several times administering stimulants."

"City Point, Va., July 22, 1864.

"We the undersigned promise not to use any intoxicating drinks as a beverage, with the help of God.

"Joseph Ward.  
Wm. H. Wait."

## BROWN UNIVERSITY

"The one who signed this pledge with me is one who has fallen from grace through strong drink. I conversed with him and he promised to sign the pledge if I would. May God help us both to keep it and to grow in grace every day."

"The Same, July 25, 1864.

"On my return passed the cemetery as they were about to bury a man without any service. I read a few verses from the 7th of Revelations and made a few remarks, closing with prayer. It seemed very sad and solemn to me to bury an unknown soldier, with nothing but his blanket about him, and far from his friends at home."

"The Same, July 26, 1864.

"Very many came in from the front. We fired up the Christian Commission Coffee Pot\* and drew it around among the men, who received us with many expressions of thankfulness. Dr. Hammond, surgeon of the Division, thanked me for our assistance."

"The Same, Aug. 5, 1864.

"The Second Corps left their post at the front, and started for—somewhere, and on their way passed by here and filled up our hospital. 600 were brought in. We made tea and coffee for them and carried crackers along with us. Having some left we took it to some on the road. Worked till 1:30 A.M. Dr. Hammond thanked me for our assistance. All the surgeons were very thankful for our assistance."

\*This coffee pot on wheels, it seems, was an affair of Ward's invention and became quite famous.

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

So passed these vacation months, and so passed these four years at the University from '61 to '65. Broken and imperfect as his college course was, these were years of rich experience which could not fail to call forth his best powers. His engagement with Sarah Wood from this time forth shed inspiring radiance upon his path. His later army service under the Christian Commission, religious and patriotic in one, in the midst of scenes of suffering and sorrow and death never to be forgotten, was a training in sympathy and in the knowledge of deep things of the heart, to which a nature like his was unusually responsive. More than ever his life is now dominated by earnestness of devotion and purpose, which augurs the highest fruitfulness for the remaining period of his education, his theological course at Andover Seminary.

His friend Daugherty relates an incident which is characteristic of Ward and his spirit of patriotism at this time. "Edward Everett Hale published in the Atlantic Monthly in War days his most thrilling story, 'A Man Without a Country.' Ward read it and burned with indignation against our government for so abusing a man, even though the man was a criminal. At first he could not be convinced that the story was fictitious, but when Mr. Hale declared it a pure invention, Ward turned his indignation, but little modified, against Mr. Hale, for having trifled with the feelings of patriotic people by such an invention. The faith in the truth of that which on the surface appeared to be true, the indignation

## BROWN UNIVERSITY

against the Government for which he imperilled his life, the condemnation of a lie told for any purpose—these reveal the man, uncritical, but a lover of truth and a passionate, energetic devotee to what seemed to him right, a modified Puritan of a later age.”

---

The fall of 1865, following his graduation from Brown, Ward entered Andover Theological Seminary, from which he graduated in the class of 1868. The circumstances of his education up to this point had been, as we have seen, fortunate and inspiring; and now his course at Andover Seminary was all that could be desired for the ideal rounding out of his preparation for the ministry. Andover Seminary represented the historic strength and the best traditions of Congregationalism. Itself an offshoot of the still older Phillips Academy of Andover, it was the oldest theological seminary in the country, and the mother of similar institutions that have since been established. From the beginning it had stood with increasing power and influence for the theology handed down from the New England Fathers, in opposition to the tide of Unitarianism which rose and for a time flourished so alarmingly in that part of the country. The time was indeed near at hand when the historic Seminary was to break with the orthodoxy of the past, and become the world-famous champion of the “new theology,” or “progressive orthodoxy” of a younger school of theologians, and in that cause

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

to suffer dire wrack and martyrdom. But when Ward was there as a student the older men, those who had hitherto made Andover great and increasingly victorious in its sway over the churches, were still in the height of their power. Chief among these men of the older school were the distinguished Professor Edwards Amasa Park, one of the greatest of the great school of New England theologians and one of the most influential teachers of his generation, and Professor Austin Phelps, of the chair of Sacred Rhetoric, also one of the great teachers of his time, who became president of the Seminary in 1869. The newer men, however, who were soon to become leaders in the Seminary and carry the day for "progressive orthodoxy," were already on the ground, and recognized for their scholarship and devotion. Most notable among these was Professor Egbert C. Smyth, just entered upon his professorship of Ecclesiastical History, later conspicuous as one of the founders of the "Andover Review" and a great leader in the progressive movement in theology.

The fame of the Seminary and its teachers at this time had attracted to its halls a most remarkable body of students, and with a considerable number of the finest minds among them Ward formed abiding friendships. An impression of the inspiring character of student society at the Seminary in those days may be had by a glance at the names of a few of those who have since become well-known leaders in lines of educational and religious activity, for instance the following:

## BROWN UNIVERSITY

President William J. Tucker, of Dartmouth College; Dr. C. F. P. Bancroft, principal of Phillips Academy; Professor John P. Taylor and Professor John W. Churchill, of Andover Seminary; the Rev. Dr. Newman Smyth, of the First Church of New Haven, Connecticut; the Rev. Dr. James Brand, of the First Church, Oberlin, Ohio; the Rev. Dr. Henry M. Tenney, of the Second Church, Oberlin, Ohio; President Edward T. Bartlett, of the Episcopal Divinity School, Philadelphia; the Rev. Dr. James G. Daugherty, sometime president of Colorado College; the Rev. Thomas L. Gulick, noted missionary of the American Board; the Rev. John Edgar, Ph.D., president of Wilson College, Pennsylvania; Ezra Brainard, LL.D., president of Middleborough College; President George Harris, of Amherst College; Professor George T. Ladd, of Yale University; the Rev. Dr. DeWitt S. Clark, of the Tabernacle Church, Salem, Massachusetts; and Professor George H. Palmer, of Harvard University.

The circle of friends he formed at Andover, in Academy and Seminary, together with a few others of kindred faith and vision with himself, were the ones whom Ward of Dakota used to speak of as the Wise Men of the East. They were the friends who watched over the birth of Yankton College from afar with loving auspices, and with their means, their influence, and their prayers aided year by year in its upbuilding.

It is always to be remembered—and in connection with Joseph Ward the fact is particularly significant—that Andover Seminary was domi-

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

nated by the missionary spirit. The influence of the years he spent there helped to make him the great champion of missions which he was in all his after career. This historic institution had been from the first an inspiring centre of missionary faith and works. The "American Board," earliest organization in this country for carrying on foreign missions, was nourished in its infancy on Andover's "Sacred Hill." A daughter of one of the old professors at Andover, writing not long ago in tender reminiscence on the subject of the missionary spirit there, said: "Their faith in the ultimate conversion of the world was so strong, so living and active, that it colored the whole Andover life—brooding over the Hill with a power as compelling as it was invisible. I do not believe that a prayer was ever offered, public or private, by any of the pious souls there, which lacked an earnest petition for the ends of the earth. No one object lay more near the heart; no other claimed the peculiar warmth of affection lavished upon this. I think I am not wrong in saying that for years Andover was the heart of missions." \*

Ward's career was dominated by that same living and active faith in "the ultimate conversion of the world"—a faith whose power and measure was like that of the saints of old Andover and akin to that of the inspired prophets and leaders in any period of the history of mankind.

The principal account of Ward's course at An-

\*Sarah Stuart Robbins, in "The Congregationalist," September 3, 1910.

## BROWN UNIVERSITY

dover Seminary was written for the Memorial Number of "The Yankton Student" by the Rev. Dr. C. F. P. Bancroft, his life-long friend, and for a more particular impression of those years a portion of that article may here be quoted:

"Mr. Ward came into this inspiring atmosphere and did his full share to maintain and intensify it. He had known Andover as a student in the Academy for three years, and he was returning as an old friend to haunts that were dear and familiar, to persons and families he knew, to religious activities in which he had been engaged before; he had committed himself wholly and heartily to the work of the ministry; he was surrounded by intimate friends whom he had known previously in school and college, and he added to them choice souls whom he was meeting for the first time; he had lived in the West and in the East, and campaigned in the South, and he knew that wide fields were white for the harvest; he was in perfect health; he was happily engaged to the lady who became his wife; he was twenty-seven. It would be difficult to imagine conditions more favorable for three years of patient, faithful, loving preparation for his great work.

"As a theological student he showed the same traits which made him subsequently the effective home missionary, the faithful pastor, the enterprising and sagacious college president. There was the same candor of judgment, the same frankness and openness of expression, quickness of sympathy, abounding good humor, fertility of

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

resources, the same turn for practical business, the same integrity and solidity of character, and robust but gracious piety. Those who knew what Dr. Ward was in Dakota can readily understand what he must have been in the Seminary.

“In the special work of a theological student he was faithful to the main purpose of preparing himself for the Christian ministry. This one thing he did, and everything else was subordinate and accessory. He had no specialty; he was an ‘all-round’ student. The Bible, church life and church history, theology proper, the theory and art of preaching, the practical work of the Christian Church in the world—he gave himself to all of them with conscientious painstaking. There is no significance in the circumstance that his graduation thesis was on ‘The Messianic Significance of Exodus III, 14,’ but there is in the fact that he was given the honorable first place on the program.

“His interest in missions was pronounced, and he took an active part in the Society for Inquiry and became one of its best officers. For this Society he prepared a ‘Sketch of Dr. Grant of the Mission to the Nestorians,’ and a ‘Historical Survey of Missions for the Year 1866.’ His interest in home missions was equally great. The Porter Rhetorical Society was distinctly forensic and literary, and although he took some part in it, he seems to have had less interest in it because it was more remote from the work he had in hand. Yet many can recall the hearty way in which he ‘unbent from sterner thoughts,’ perhaps

## BROWN UNIVERSITY

in Newman Smyth's or DeWitt Clark's room a half hour after dinner, when literature or politics led up to sharp debate, or witty talk burst into peals of laughter. He was always in the class prayer meeting, and there he took a foremost part with a rare sense of privilege and duty.

"He resumed, too, in the first part of his course his activity in mission Sunday Schools, in neighborhood prayer meetings, and in house-to-house visitation. At the end of his middle year he was licensed to preach, and he supplied acceptably many churches one or more Sabbaths during his senior year. His vacations he always spent in work. The first spring vacation of six weeks while in the Seminary he spent in the employ of the Home Missionary Society among the mountains of Vermont, and many a weary mile he tramped through snows and slush in his ministration to the scattered flock of this wide country parish. The hundreds of boys in the Academy gave him a large field close at hand for using in unconventional ways his rare gifts of sympathy and tact in encouraging young disciples and influencing the wayward and the thoughtless to choose the right paths."



CHAPTER V  
COMING TO DAKOTA



## CHAPTER V

### COMING TO DAKOTA

**A**UGUST 12, 1868, shortly following his graduation from Andover Theological Seminary, Joseph Ward married Sarah Frances Wood, at Central Falls, Rhode Island. The wedding was a beautiful one, surrounded by circumstances of wealth and culture, and the occasion full of great joy and promise. The bride was a lovely and accomplished girl, of pure Christian spirit and devotion, and the young minister, like herself of excellent New England blood, was splendidly trained for his work, and already marked for a bright future. Both were ready and glad to go to whatever place they might be called, however remote and hard it might be.

It was in accord with the spirit of devotion and courage animating them both that they soon after accepted an appointment to missionary service at Yankton, the capital of Dakota Territory, at that time a village of a few hundred inhabitants on the far western border of civilization. The matter of their going to that particular outpost of the world seems to have been directed by providence. A missionary Congregational church had been organized at Yankton early in the same year, 1868,

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

the first church of that denomination in Dakota, and a call at that time had been extended to Joseph Ward, of Andover Seminary, to become its pastor. This he had declined, being unwilling to quit the Seminary before completing his course; and also at the same time had declined a call from the American Board to go as a missionary to Turkey—for the same reason. When the time arrived of his graduation from Andover, however, another opportunity opened before him of the First Congregational Church at Oakland, California. This he accepted, and soon after had his books packed for the long sea-voyage “round the Horn”—for that was before the Union Pacific Railroad was completed. Then suddenly, just as Mr. Ward and his bride were on the point of sailing, word was received not to come—that the church had called another man. It was a deep disappointment. Yet no sooner was the door closed in that direction, than, strange to say, it opened again in the direction of Yankton. He now accepted the appointment to that place, and after visiting relatives in Brooklyn, western New York, and Michigan, Mr. and Mrs. Ward set out on their journey to Dakota.

Something of the romance and adventure of the prospect before their minds as they travelled westward may be realized when we remember that the region they were bound for was still the almost unlimited range of myriads of buffalo, and the vast hunting-ground of the yet unconquered tribes of the Sioux. It was only six decades before this time that Lewis and Clark had pushed

## COMING TO DAKOTA

their way up the broad Missouri on their great expedition, through a country practically unknown, camping one August day near the very spot where Yankton now stands. It was only seven years before Joseph Ward's coming that the Federal Government had organized the Territory of Dakota, embracing at that time the present states of North and South Dakota, Wyoming, Montana, and Eastern Idaho. At the time Joseph and Sarah Ward came, that which is now the magnificent agricultural domain of North and South Dakota, with the Black Hills and all their mineral wealth, was still practically unexplored, and the only settlements were along a little strip of the Missouri valley for a hundred miles or so above Sioux City, and a still smaller isolated beginning far away to the north in the valley of the Pembina River. According to the United States Census of 1870, two years after their arrival, the total white population of the Territory, including soldiers, Indian agents, and territorial officials, was only fourteen thousand souls.

Such was the Dakota of 1868, the land of promise to which Joseph Ward had been sent. All Dakota was his parish! The officers of the Home Missionary Society in New York had sent him forth to pre-empt the Territory in the name of the Lord.

Their mission included not only churches but schools in the new land. Mr. and Mrs. Ward, true to their ancestry and training, entered upon their work in the conscious spirit of the Pilgrim Fathers, and "realizing that history repeats itself

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

in the founding of every new state as ‘westward the star of empire takes its way,’ these Pilgrims believed in the planting of the church and school-house side by side.” It was no insignificant fact that old Dr. Badger, secretary of the Home Missionary Society in New York, when he gave Joseph Ward his commission, had specially charged him that he should “see to it that the cause of Christian education be vigorously carried on in the great Northwest.” It will be seen hereafter with what fidelity and utter devotion he fulfilled that trust.

These were things to dream on as they journeyed westward. Sioux City, Iowa, was as far as the railroad went. There they spent the night, and at five o’clock the next morning took the stage for the sixty-five mile trip up the Missouri valley to the place of their destination. The scene of that journey was the same as when the old explorers and fur traders first gazed upon it, its great primeval expanse scarcely yet disturbed by any sign of human habitation. All day long they travelled over the broad bottom land, with views of the river in its majestic sweep, and endless stretches of sandbar, reddening here and there with autumn color in the low overgrowth of willow, while on either side of the level valley the great bluffs, in the brown tints of the prairie grasses, rolled in billows to the uplands beyond. Scarcely a tree was to be seen, except for the scrubby plum brush fringing the ravines. Now and then they would see a settler’s cabin—but *northward*, as a Yankton gentleman who travelled

## COMING TO DAKOTA

with them that day took occasion to observe, with a wave of his hand in that direction, *there was not a white man between them and the British possessions*—which, although a rather sweeping statement, was doubtless almost literally true. In the course of the journey they passed through the little villages of Elk Point and Vermillion, new settlements like Yankton, started only a few years before, and at the James River, four miles from their destination, the stage was ferried across the stream in a flatboat. At the end of the long day, “just as one of those gorgeous sunsets—famous in this latitude—was fading into dusk, and the lights were beginning to twinkle from the windows of every little cabin in the settlement, the lumbering old stagecoach rattled into Yankton, bringing among other passengers the new missionary minister and his wife from the Far East.”

What happened next, and what the coming of Joseph Ward meant in the life of one, at least, of the inhabitants of Yankton, is recorded in an article published many years afterward in “The Monthly South Dakotan” entitled “Recollections of the Mother Church,” by Deacon Ephraim Miner, who became Dr. Ward’s lifelong friend. “On the sixth of November, a few minutes after the stage arrived from Sioux City, a young man came into the store and walked back to where I was standing. He was somewhat over six feet in height, broad-shouldered, well-proportioned, plainly but neatly dressed, and looked as if he might be a travelling man or a young lawyer or doctor, or possibly a young preacher. At all

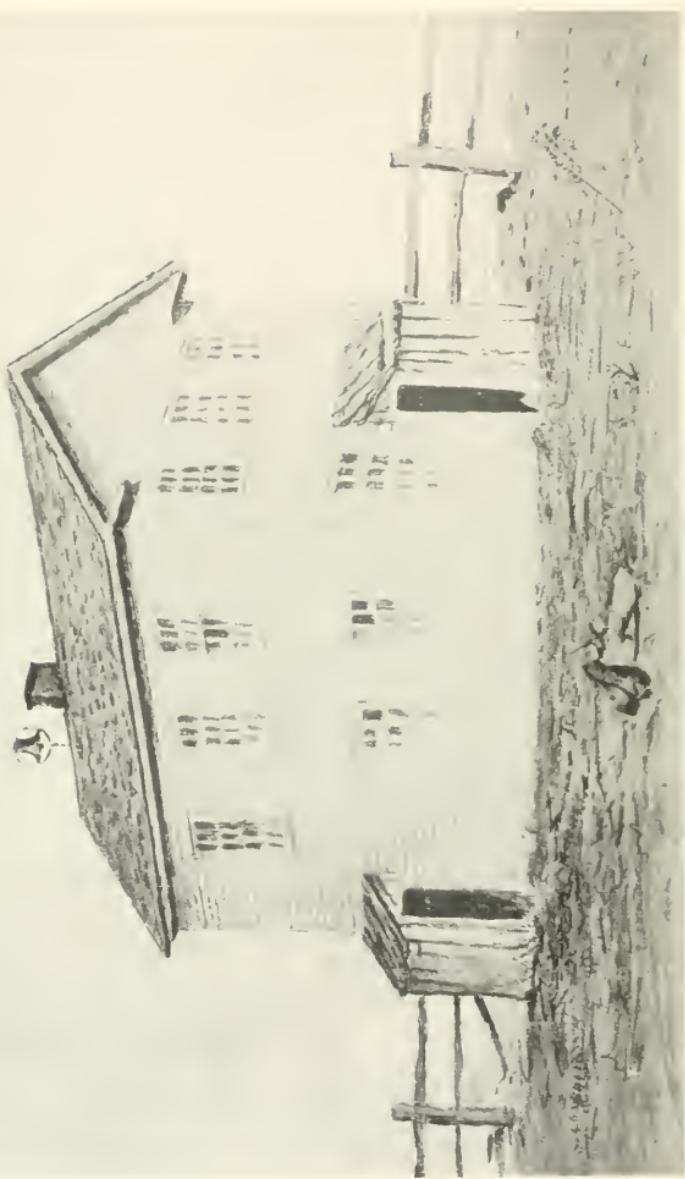
## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

events he looked like a man who could 'do things.' He said he was looking for a man named Miner. I told him that my name was Miner, and then he told me that his name was Ward, and somehow we got hold of each other's hands, and for twenty-one years and one month we walked and worked together hand in hand as closely as any two brothers could, until I sat at the bedside and held his hand and felt the life go out of it; and when I go where he is I expect he will be waiting to take me by the hand as I did him when he came to Yankton."

Deacon Miner was one of the ten original members of the Yankton church. Another of the ten was Mr. A. G. Fuller, one of the substantial men of the town; and it was at his home, a frame house fronting the river, quite large and elegant for those times, that the minister and his wife were received for board and lodging that first winter. The one window of their second-floor room looked to the East, whence they might behold of a morning the sunrise over the lonely sand-bars and the Nebraska hills, and in the foreground nearly all that there was of the village of Yankton—a few stores, and scattering log cabins, with the white points of Indian tepees among the plum brush, close in by the river bank.

The services of the newly-organized church were being held that fall in the old Capitol Building (now vanished), an unpainted frame structure which stood opposite the present site of the Yankton Public Library. There, on the 8th of November, 1868, in the bare, plain, lower room of the





THE OLD CAPITOL BUILDING

## COMING TO DAKOTA

Territorial House of Representatives, standing behind a pulpit improvised of a dry-goods box, decently draped with cambric, Joseph Ward preached his first sermon in Dakota. He took for his text 1 Corinthians, 3:11, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." He records in his diary that the day was very stormy, cold and snowing, and that thirty-three were present at the morning service. There were six present at the prayer meeting the following Wednesday evening. Mrs. Ward has written of how "the weekly prayer meetings began in the old Capitol Building, and were chiefly attended by the minister and his wife and the sexton, faithful James Witherspoon, a character in his way; but how grandly he stood by the pastor in those lonely, early days! Sometimes there came to the prayer meeting a veritable 'mother in Israel' with her family of little children trailing along after her into the seat. But she was a busy, overworked mother, and could not always come to the prayer meeting, although her heart was with us always." The bad weather continued, according to Mr. Ward's diary, with a succession of stormy Sabbaths and slender audiences. It may well have seemed to him at times in those "lonely, early days" that the prospect for the church was not the brightest. "If we are to have any blessing," he says once, "it must come from the Lord surely, for vain is the help of man in this place."

The scene of those services in the old Capitol Building must have been in strange contrast with

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

sessions of those early legislatures, when the making of laws and the procedure of courts was just beginning to supplant the *regime* of vigilance committees, and when booted and spurred statesmen from the up-river counties were wont to invite attention to their remarks at the muzzle of a six-shooter. It was perhaps a sign of milder days that were coming that, upon the convening of the legislature a month after his arrival in Yankton, Mr. Ward found his audiences largely augmented by members of that body. He notes also, in a memorandum of one of his Sunday services about this time that "several Indians and squaws were present." Another sign of advancing civilization in Yankton was that about this time the voice of a church bell was first heard in the place. The manner of its acquisition was both picturesque and providential. "About that time," Mrs. Ward writes, "the steamer 'Imperial' burned\* a few miles up the river, and among the other wreckage saved was the bell, which fell into the hands of Judge Brookings and he presented it to the church. We immediately mounted it on the old Capitol Building, and you may be sure we felt quite proud when, for the first time in Yankton, the people could gather 'at the sound of the church-going bell.'" That old historic

\*Mrs. Ward's account is probably inaccurate in this particular. It seems instead that the steamer "Imperial" was frozen into the ice a few miles above Yankton, and was there attached for debt, and the bell and other movables taken by creditors. But it was that old "Imperial" bell which was mounted on the old Capitol Building. I lack proof for the further statement that the same bell hangs on the Yankton High School to-day, but several old timers believe it to be the same one.

## COMING TO DAKOTA

bell still rings in Yankton, and in the course of its existence it has indeed "spoken a various language." From the Capitol Building it passed to the Yankton Academy, organized by Mr. Ward in the '70's, and in due time was inherited by the Yankton High School, where it continues in use to the present day.

Mr. Ward, in a sermon preached seven years afterward, recalled with deep feeling those meetings of the pioneer church in the old Capitol Building. "A few of us can remember that old room as it used to look seven years ago, and not one but has some interesting part of his experience dating back to that place. In that room was held the funeral service of the first member of our Sunday School who was taken from us by death, which was also the first funeral service I attended in this place. Three days later the room was used for the funeral of an aged mother of eighty-one years, the first of our church to enter the church above. There, too, many voices for the first time spoke tremblingly of their love for Christ and gave themselves to him in everlasting covenant. There your pastor was ordained to the work of the gospel ministry, and installed as leader of this company of believers, and there for the first time he broke the bread and poured the cup in memory of our Lord."

During that winter the congregation moved out of the "statehouse" and into other temporary quarters in a room known as "Fuller's Hall," where they continued until a church building was erected and ready for occupancy, in January,

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

1870. The building of that house of worship was a great achievement for Mr. and Mrs. Ward and for the people of Yankton. At the Christmas festival of the Church held that first winter in Fuller's Hall a gift was received from Gen. J. S. B. Todd, of Yankton, of two lots on which to build. A day or two later Mr. Ward, accompanied by Gen. Todd and his man, Tim Welby, drove out north of town to make a selection of the lots. At the corner of Fifth and Walnut—what seemed then quite out in the country—Mr. Ward indicated his choice. "Here we will build our church," he said. Mr. Welby, who recalls the incident, tells how Mr. Ward then alighted from the buggy, and standing there in the snow upon the chosen spot, bared his head and prayed for the blessing of God upon the donor, and upon that sacred ground upon which was to be erected the pioneer Congregational church of the Dakotas. With this fine start of the gift of lots Mr. Ward and his people at once began to plan for their building. The people of the town as a whole entered into the project with a will, subscribing liberally and often at great sacrifice, felt the more in such pioneer times when living was full of privations at the best. The women held a wonderful bazaar at the old St. Charles Hotel, and by that enterprise and other efforts raised some three thousand dollars for the cause. Eastern friends of Mr. and Mrs. Ward contributed a considerable sum.

This remarkable success of building a good-sized and commodious church in a little over a

## COMING TO DAKOTA

year from the time Mr. Ward came was followed up within a year or two more by the Church becoming self-supporting, no longer dependent upon the Home Missionary Society for financial aid, and along with that becoming increasingly a supporter of Dakota missions of its own, aiding in the establishment of new churches in the settlements farther up the Missouri, and in the valleys of the Sioux, the Vermillion, and the James rivers.

The vigorous and successful initiative of Mr. Ward's work, and the early growth of the Church in numbers and influence, are the more noteworthy when it is remembered how near those times were to the virtual beginnings of all things in Dakota. The story is told of how the postmaster at Yankton used to distribute the mail. He carried the letters around in the top of his hat, and gave them out to persons addressed as he happened to meet them on the street. The fear of Indians, to be sure, had come now to be regarded as a mark of the tenderfoot, and Mr. Ward says that when they came "the cheerful custom was already well established of making Indian raids, scalpings, and other like trifles, the staple of conversation for the benefit of new comers. For a long time we were like children listening to the toughest ghost stories that could be invented, and we expected nothing less than tomahawks and bullets month after month. But we got over it soon enough to laugh at a man just in from the East who armed himself with his rifle and revolver for a walk from the International Hotel to

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

the Post Office." Whether Mrs. Ward actually got over it so soon is perhaps open to question. She confessed in after years that she lived for a long time in an agony of dread, though she kept it all to herself. And in point of fact the grim particulars of horror and bloodshed were quite too near and authentic for comfort. The Minnesota massacres, and subsequent bloody outrages all along the Dakota settlements, were fresh in the memory of Yankton people, and during that reign of terror the town had been huddled in for weeks behind a stockade fortification, under guard of a company of soldiers, in hourly expectation of attack. Mrs. Ward, speaking of those early years of their residence in Yankton, recalls the "Indian scares" every spring, when it was reported that the "hos-tiles" were on the war path and were "coming down to wipe out Yankton!" "Life was made miserable for the new-comers," she writes, "for *there were the Indians* in evidence at every turn. They went about peeking into the windows of people's houses and walked in without knocking any hour of the day. Yankton was full of Indians. All up and down the main street of the town, the platforms in front of the stores were gay with the bright blankets of the squaws, while the Indian men stood about the streets in silent knots and groups. The plum brush in Lower Yankton was full of their tepees and there were tepees on the bluffs where Yankton College now stands. In those days Indian women were the only available 'help' in the household; and it was only Indian *women* that could be

## COMING TO DAKOTA

hired for the purpose if one wanted one's cord-wood split; and it was really magnificent the way they could swing the ax. Grace and power were combined in the stroke."

It was several years before the railroad crept up-river from Sioux City to Yankton. To the end of her days Mrs. Ward declared that she loved to hear the sound of locomotives—even to sleep close to the puffing and noise of trains at night—as the effect of the long years of lonely silence in the early times at Yankton.

The old Sioux City stage, running two or three times a week, was a slender thread of communication with the outside world, and even that was liable to be broken off in wintertime by storms and drifted roads. But the time of comparative freedom was the open season of the river traffic when the steamers began to come. "So keen a thrill of joy as used to awake in every heart at the cry which every spring announced the arrival of the first boat! Almost the whole town would rush to the Levee, with eyes strained for the first glimpse of those two black smokestacks down the stream. How anxiously we watched her slow progress 'round the bend, past the old saw-mill, and how we cheered as the men sprang ashore with the lines! What a volley of questions and answers! What a rush to get on board! For that boat was no mere boat. It was a messenger from another world. It was a part of our old eastern home wafted to us on the wings and streams of spring. It told us that our long isolation from the outside world was at an end, and

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

that for months to come we would have almost a daily visitation from the life which we had left. To name those old boats is like telling the names of one's old family friends: the 'Deer Lodge,' for three years in succession the first boat up the river (didn't they use to spend a month or so before the break-up, speculating—betting, did I say?—as to which would be the first boat up?), the 'Ida Rees,' the 'Antelope' (burned at last just above here), the 'Josephine,'—I might name a score, but will only give one more—the 'Hiram Wood.' Honorable name! When shippers could get freight on the 'Hiram Wood,' with Billy Gould for a pilot, they never took out any insurance. On that boat, and under that captain's guidance, came the lumber for this church, and it came safely and on time. . . . .

"The boats frequently tied up at the landing for the night: great flaring beacons lighted up the river banks for a great distance, in the glare of which the roustabouts rolled out the freight upon the dock; and then there was the sound of music, and a crowd of Yankton's young people went on board for a dance." . . . .

"It is hard in these reminiscences to get away from the river," writes Mr. Ward. "We might linger there longer, and looking across to the Nebraska shore recall the beautiful prospect which always suggested the hymn,

'Sweet fields beyond the swelling floods  
Stand dressed in living green.'

The name Green Island was not the misnomer it

## COMING TO DAKOTA

is now. There was a beautiful grove, almost a forest, and the bottom lands were not then swept with destruction as we see them to-day. No wonder that some of the old residents on that side were never able to get over their *grief*, to say nothing of their *loss*, caused by the flood of a year ago."

In connection with this subject of the river, it is a fact only too well known that Yankton, as Mrs. Ward has said, "had the reputation of being one of the worst of 'river towns,' with all that that name implies of wildness and wickedness. No doubt there was need enough of a gospel mission at Yankton. It certainly harbored many a desperate character; murders were not infrequent, and now and then a lynching made things lively.

"On the other hand," she goes on, "society was of the very best at Yankton. Of course, being the capital of the Territory, it was the residence of the refined and cultivated families of the United States officials. At that time all the ladies could be gotten together for a single tea party . . . . So the wives and mothers, who were not entirely wonted to the newness of their surroundings, nor as yet entirely free from occasional qualms of homesickness, used often to get together for delightful and comforting little visits 'over the teacups,' even though the houses were small. We recall one of these delightful little 'luncheons,' the 'governor's lady,' newly arrived from the East, being present, where the bed having to be taken down to accommodate that

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

hospitable table, viands were passed in and out of the open window, a part of the guests having to find ingress and egress by the same means. If there were not chairs enough to 'go 'round' at sundry meetings of the ladies' sewing society, the ladies did not mind sitting about on the floors. There was always a very ready and cheerful adaptation to circumstances. One may date from that time a habit of meeting together in the utmost friendliness, and working together in the spirit of mutual love and respect as time developed a need of woman's work and ministry to the common weal."

CHAPTER VI  
LAYING FOUNDATIONS



## CHAPTER VI

### LAYING FOUNDATIONS

**J**OSEPH WARD'S pastorate of the pioneer Congregational Church of Dakota, begun in 1868, continued for fourteen years, when he laid down the work to take up active duty as president of Yankton College. This part of his career, which will be the subject of this chapter and the one following, covers the larger part of the territorial period of Dakota history, extending practically from the beginning of settlement to the beginning of the struggle for statehood. During these fourteen years, in spite of blizzards and drouths and frequent devastation by grasshoppers, immigration flowed rapidly into Dakota, reaching its high tide in the great "boom" of the early '80's. The population of the Territory increased from the 14,000 of 1870 to nearly 200,000 in 1880, and Yankton, the capital, grew from the 400 of 1868 to over 4,000 in 1882. In the middle of this period came the great exciting gold-rush for the Black Hills, precipitating the terrible last struggle of the Sioux Indians against the white invaders, and followed by their final settlement on the government reservations. During these fourteen years, as settlement extended westward and northward over the prairies, there were laid the missionary foundations of the future state, and the work of education was carried for-

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

ward which led to the founding of the first college and other institutions of higher learning which quickly followed, and to the establishment of a splendid public school system when the new state was formed.

In following the work of Mr. Ward during these fourteen years of his pastorate we are to see how his influence, in affairs of church and school and state, broadened out into this expanding life of the whole Commonwealth. Dakota was his parish: the saying became more and more a substantial fact. He was one of many good builders, men who, in this time of flux and speculation and unrestraint, were working to lay solid foundations of trade and industry, of law and order, of education and religion—men whose names will be honored in the annals of Dakota. Yet of all those Dakota pioneers, Joseph Ward, the Pilgrim preacher, educator, and patriot, was the truest empire builder. More than any other he absorbed the spirit of the growing commonwealth, realizing its tendency and power with the vision of a prophet. Continuously during those formative years his hand was shaping things at the most vital points. It has been well said of him that whatever future line of historical investigation one may follow up in Dakota one will find at the foundation of things the hand of Joseph Ward.

---

In the beginning, and through all the years of his pastorate of the Yankton Church, he was

## LAYING FOUNDATIONS

above all things faithful to his mission as a Christian minister. He preached the gospel as he understood it, and as he was all the time proving it in his own experience. It was his nature to seek to convert people in the direct evangelistic way. That very first winter, in the old Capitol Building, the church experienced a revival, and others followed from time to time. He knew how to preach heaven and hell with due effect, but it was characteristic of him to place his emphasis and base his conclusions upon the experience of this life, rather than upon reports and speculations as to the world beyond the grave. "We do not become Christians simply to get to heaven, which to many means only to escape hell. Both motives are good, and certainly powerful. But there is something worse than to be in hell, and something better than to be in heaven. To have a sinful heart, that brings one to the state and place called hell, is worse than to be in hell. To have a holy heart, that finally brings one to the presence of Christ, and into heaven, is better than to be in heaven." In line with this practical view of heaven and hell was his idea of what it meant to be "saved." "Just as soon as we are sorry for sin and want to get away from it, just the instant we tell God we are tired of sin and wish to leave it, God at once converts us, i. e., he turns us round. Before, we were walking away from God and toward sin; before, we let all our life grow away from Christ; but after we put ourselves in the hands of God by repenting, we walk toward God and away from sin, and our life be-

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

gins to grow toward Christ. This *beginning* of growth is regeneration, but *continuing* in it is salvation. Regeneration, then, is a single act; while salvation is a lifelong process."

There was one revival in 1872, the second winter after they moved into the new church, of which he has left some account in his diary. It is evident that there was a remarkable absence of excitement, and that the spirit of the meetings was one of thoughtfulness and solemnity. "The interest is very deep and quiet," he writes. "New faces are seen every evening." . . . . "The largest meeting yet, and very solemn." There was never any taint of the sensational in his evangelistic preaching. He supplemented the evening services by personal talks during the day at people's homes and places of business—just as he had done among his fellow students at Phillips Academy. Especially notable in his diary record of these meetings is the number of *men* who were converted—many of them well known and prominent men in the history of the community and of the state. In those years one might see, instead of the wife alone joining the church, the husband and wife joining together.

The influence of Mr. Ward's preaching was strongly supported by the practice of his daily life. Of him we may say simply, as Chaucer said of his "good man of religion," that

"Christes lore and his apostles twelve  
He taughte, but first he folwed it himselfe."

Instances of unobtrusive deeds of neighborly

## LAYING FOUNDATIONS

kindness and charity inevitably come to mind when people speak in reminiscence of Mr. and Mrs. Ward. A reputed infidel is remembered to have said: "I take no stock in what is called Christianity, but if Mr. Ward is a Christian I believe in that kind, for while my family was sick of a contagious disease, no one came near us but a person who brought each day's supply of food to our back gate every night after dark, and it was sometime after we were released from quarantine before we knew our benefactor to have been Mr. Ward." There was another man, a harness maker, who was led to conversion by observing in Mr. Ward a very simple act of charity. He was a drinking man and had led a hard life. Mr. Ward had called on him at his shop that winter while his revival meetings were going on and endeavored to interest him in the subject of religion, but had met with only scoffing and repulse. A few days afterward, just before Christmas, this man happened to pass by a grocery store late in the evening and saw Mr. Ward come out of the door with a sack of flour on his back. It was snowing and a cold night. The minister did not turn toward home. Where was he going with a sack of flour on his own back, in such weather, and at that late hour? The harness maker's curiosity was aroused; he went along too, quietly "shadowing his man" through the snow down a side street, until he saw that sack of flour deposited on the doorstep of a poor widow of the town. The minister gave a loud rap at the door—then skipped away, boy-like, no doubt chuckling hap-

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

pily over his Christmas secret. But here was a case where God, who seeth in secret, rewarded him openly—for that man who spied the deed pondered it in his mind, and concluded that Mr. Ward's religion was a good thing after all: for he came to the meetings, was promptly converted, joined the church and eventually became a deacon of the same, developed into a capable and influential citizen, in due time became a trustee and liberal supporter of the College, and stood as a power for righteousness in the community all the rest of his days.

Stories like these of the way he went about doing good might be related without number. They belong to the folklore of Yankton.

The extending of Mr. Ward's missionary labors beyond the limits of his Yankton pastorate began the very first year. There was soon a little church organized at Bon Homme, twenty miles up the river, where Mr. Ward served for a time—until Father Nichols was called to the place—making the trip by team once in three or four weeks. He preached also across the river on the Nebraska side at a place called Elm Grove, and soon at Green Island, that beautiful village directly across the river from Yankton, and within hailing distance from the foot of Capitol Street, of which every vestige was swept away in the flood of 1881. There he conducted services Sunday afternoons, walking over on the ice in winter and rowing across in a skiff when the river was open, which work he continued until Father Seccombe came to take charge of the Green Island

## LAYING FOUNDATIONS

Church. Under Mr. Ward's leadership there was soon formed a Congregational Association of Dakota, embracing these and other new churches that quickly sprang up at Canton, Sioux Falls and Dell Rapids in the Big Sioux Valley, at Elk Point, Vermillion and Springfield on the Missouri, and also the Indian Mission at Santee, Nebraska, just across from Springfield, then recently started by the Rev. A. L. Riggs, of the historic Riggs family of Indian missionaries. Many of these early churches were organized and established under Mr. Ward's care, and in some cases they received financial aid from the Yankton Church. The time soon came, however, with the swift extension of settlement, when there was need of the service of a general missionary to promote the cause of Congregational missions in the Territory. Through the influence of Mr. Ward the man called to this position was the Rev. Stewart Sheldon, his sister's husband, at whose home he had lived while attending Brown University. Through Mr. Sheldon he continued to be in close touch with the rapidly-extending missions of the Territory, as new churches were planted all along the Missouri, and up the valleys of the Big Sioux, the Vermillion and the James, through the decade of the '70's. Joseph Ward has been rightly called the father of Congregationalism in Dakota. He was not only the pioneer minister and organizer of the earliest churches, but his hand and influence were upon all the work of Dakota missions throughout the great period of immigration, and on to the end of his life.

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

Mr. Ward, through his early friendship with the Rev. A. L. Riggs, soon became interested in Indian missions. In the summer of 1872 he made an overland trip with Mr. Riggs up the valley of the Big Sioux to Sisseton Agency in the north-eastern corner of South Dakota to attend a conference of Indian churches at that place. At that early time the Big Sioux Valley above the settlements at Sioux Falls and Dell Rapids was only beginning to be occupied by white men. At Flandreau, where a body of Santee Indians had recently taken up their abode, they met the Rev. Mr. Williamson, of that other historic family of Indian missionaries, who was conducting a meeting in the new Indian church there. Resuming their journey northward they soon passed the last house on the Big Sioux River and from there camped only on the open prairie, subsisting in part on antelope and other game shot along the way. It was more than a week's journey, mostly through wild, untravelled country, from Yankton to the place of their destination.

The experiences of that journey made a deep impression upon the mind of Mr. Ward, whose ideas of Indians hitherto had been colored by the tales and terrors of early days in Yankton. An address that Mr. Ward made before his Yankton church upon his return from that expedition, was recalled long afterward by Dr. Joseph E. Roy, at that time field secretary of the American Home Missionary Society. "Joseph Ward," he writes, "early became the champion of the Indian's disenthralment. I was present in his

## LAYING FOUNDATIONS

church eighteen years ago, when, having just returned from the annual conference of the Dakota Christian Indians, where he met the Riggsses and the Williamses, fathers and sons, he made report to his people of that meeting, confessing that heretofore he had almost given in to that maxim, 'the only good Indian is a dead Indian,' but declaring now his faith in the Indian's reclamation and his purpose to use his utmost endeavor in that direction. Nobody knows as well as Alfred and Thomas Riggs and John Williamson and their associates how grandly he kept that covenant, always ready by counsel and sympathy and service to aid them and the Indian Christians in their undertakings. Largely by his early influence those Dakota Indian ministers and churches were brought in to be constituent parts of the Dakota General Association. For this service at the front, for his influence in forming public sentiment and for his help in shaping governmental policy, the American Missionary Association owes much to this friend at court."

At the same time with this widening connection with missions in the territory, Mr. Ward was already engaging in the work of education. He did not wait for settlement to spread out over the prairies before beginning to fulfill that commission of his to "see to it that the cause of Christian education be vigorously carried forward in the great Northwest." He found opportunity to begin a needed work of education right then and there at Yankton. In those wild new times,

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

when the population was so largely of the shifting and adventurous class, it was difficult to start and maintain public schools. Yankton had not yet been made a separate school district, and there was no adequate provision for securing school funds by taxation. The public school building of those early days, known as the "Brown School House," had been built in 1866 by the private enterprise of a noble band of Yankton women, who held a series of "festivals" in the Capitol Building during the winter of 1865-6 to raise the money. It used to be argued in those days that four or five months of school in the year was all the town could afford, and six months was about the most favorable compromise which the friends of education could gain. No attempt was made at teaching anything above the lower grades. It is remembered how, in the fall of '67, a year before Mr. Ward came, when a school tax had been voted and the treasurer went out to collect it, about half of the people declined to pay—with the result that those who did pay were presently called upon to pay again. Such was the meagre and precarious condition of education in Yankton at the time of Mr. Ward's coming. Already the slender opportunities of the old "Brown School House" were being supplemented by private enterprise in education, and it was in this field of needed effort that Mr. Ward, the second fall after his arrival in Yankton, began teaching a private school.

The school was started in the rear room of Judge Bartlett's office at the corner of Second





THE YANKTON ACADEMY, 1872

## LAYING FOUNDATIONS

and Cedar streets, with an attendance of seventeen pupils. The school soon outgrew those quarters and removed to the "Fuller Block," on the west side of Cedar Street between Second and the Levee. Among the pupils of Mr. Ward's private school were the children of a number of the well-known pioneers and prominent men of Dakota, such as Governor Newton Edmunds, Mr. W. B. Valentine, General W. H. H. Beadle, the Hon. James S. Foster, Gen. J. S. B. Todd, the Hon. H. H. Smith, Governor Andrew J. Faulk, General William Tripp, and Major F. J. DeWitt. In fact, Mr. Ward before long became the recognized leader in matters of education, and gathered about himself the support of the best men of the community, the men who were interested in schools and who had an eye to the future of the town and the territory. It was in the strength of such leadership and with the backing of such men that Mr. Ward, in 1872, organized that famous institution of the early days, the Yankton Academy. The Board of Trustees consisted of Joseph Ward, president, James S. Foster, Josiah R. Sanborn, Franklin J. DeWitt, J. A. Potter, W. H. H. Beadle, Newton Edmunds, and E. P. Wilcox. A permanent building was erected on the site of the present high school, and on New Year's evening, 1873, was dedicated with impressive ceremony. Nathan Ford, now of Rockford, Illinois, was the first principal of the Academy, and its enrollment that first year was 103.

The Yankton Academy was the outgrowth of Mr. Ward's earlier private school, and in turn the

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

forerunner of Yankton College. In a sense it was the beginning of higher education in Dakota. It was by far the most advanced school in the Territory, and continued for several years to maintain its pre-eminence in education, until the time came when Mr. Ward began to agitate the question of a college. Then it was that the Yankton Academy was given over to public control and transformed into the Yankton High School, the first public high school in Dakota. The work and influence of Mr. Ward and his associates had developed the public sentiment which made that step possible. It was Mr. Ward who framed the law which was passed by the legislature establishing a satisfactory system of public schools, including high schools, for the Territory, on the basis of which the Yankton High School was organized. He became president, and his fellow trustees of the Academy members with him, of the board of public education; and Mr. Bristoll, then principal of the Academy, was made principal of the High School. The Yankton High School, as thus started, continued the high quality of work already established by the Academy, and set the mark for other schools which were organized in the territory as time went on.

The whole question of public education in the great Territory, and in the state to be born, was of deep concern to Mr. Ward from the earliest years. He was closely associated with early territorial superintendents of public instruction, notably with the Hon. James S. Foster and Gen. W. H. H. Beadle. With Mr. Foster as early as 1872

## LAYING FOUNDATIONS

he used to discuss the question of the conservation of the public school lands of the future state; and with General Beadle he was in closest connection later on in that cause of saving the school lands, when it was taken up and made a leading issue in the struggle for statehood. It will be seen also how Mr. Ward, in the constitutional conventions of that later time, had a leading influence in forming the educational law of the future state.

Taking into consideration all the facts of Mr. Ward's work in the cause of education—his early private teaching developing into the Yankton Academy, his leadership in organizing the first high school, his founding of the first college, his important connection with early school legislation and with the school land cause as part of the statehood movement, his work in establishing the educational law of the state constitution—there would seem to be ample warrant for the title, which long ago was applied to Mr. Ward, of "founder of the educational system of South Dakota."

Dr. Charles M. Sheldon, who as a boy was living with his parents on the farm near Yankton during these years, relates an incident which finely illustrates Mr. Ward's character, and the influence of Mr. Ward at this time on his own life.

"It was my privilege while attending school in Yankton to be constantly in my uncle's home and perhaps I knew him in some ways better than any one member of our own family. I was a pupil in the school which he taught the first win-

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

ter he opened the little building in Yankton before the Academy was organized. I attended this school all that winter and could almost write a book of instances concerning little things which go to make up the sum total of a great man's life. These little things were all clear indications of a very remarkable character—in many respects the most remarkable I have ever known. I think it may safely be said that Joseph Ward was the gentlest strong man I ever knew. My earliest recollection of the real nobility of his character centered about a Christmas which was in the year he was teaching the little school to which I have referred. In addition to the work of his growing church and parish he carried together with the school work practically all the burden of initiating any kind of work in his own church by doing things himself. The whole of that Christmas week he was busy after the school-teaching hour, arranging for a Christmas gathering at a time when such gatherings were more common than they are now in the interest of the children of the Sunday School. I remember the construction of a house supposed to belong to Santa Claus occupied him during an entire week. He built this house with his own hands, helped occasionally by some young man who would come in from the church or Sunday School and assist. I think I was present in the church more or less with my uncle every afternoon of that week. There was no one in the world I respected more or loved more, but I can recall the fact that I was oftener perhaps in his way than helping him in the real

## LAYING FOUNDATIONS

work he was doing. Towards the close of the week, he had been so overwhelmed with numerous cares in connection with the school and his own home that he was exceedingly weary physically, and towards the close of the day as he was working on this Christmas house, I added to his troubles by getting in his way more than usual: and he spoke sharply to me and told me to go home. As I remember the incident now it would have served me right if he had taken me over his knee and given me a good sound whipping which I deserved; but the incident was so absolutely unique and the rebuke the first one I had ever heard from his gentle speech that I went out of the church and went home almost heartbroken. I remember clearly the incident and shall never forget it. I was so affected by what he had said that I refused to eat any supper and went up to my room and went to bed. My mother thought I was not well, as I did not tell her anything about the incident. I lay awake thinking about the matter and about eight o'clock heard the door downstairs open and my uncle come in. At that time he was living some five or six blocks from our house in Yankton. I heard him inquire of my mother where I was and she told him that I had gone upstairs to bed. He wanted to know if I was asleep, and my mother said she did not know. I heard him coming up the stairs but had not the least intimation concerning his visit. I simply wondered how it had happened that he had come after that long hard day's work to see me. When he came into the room, he stood at the head

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

of the bed while I got up into a sitting posture and looked at him. I shall never forget the way he looked and the words he spoke. He said, looking straight at me and using the name that he commonly used:

“‘Charlie, I spoke harshly to you this afternoon, and I have come to ask your pardon. I cannot sleep until I have it.’

“I was so dumfounded that, as I remember the incident, I did not even say a single word. He stood there a moment as if he understood completely my feeling in the matter and not expecting any reply, turned and went out of the room.

“As the years have gone by, I have never been able to escape the tremendous impression which that little incident left with me. Here was a great strong man, the pastor of the church, my pastor, and my uncle, who had come out on a stormy night after an exceedingly wearisome day’s work to ask the pardon of me, a small boy, because he could not rest with the real burden which lay upon his heart that he had actually committed a wrong thing in speaking hastily. I have never been able myself, looking at it from any angle, to see how he possibly committed any wrong whatever in anything he said to me, but that is not the point. He thought he had and that was enough for him. I do not believe I know any other man living in my acquaintance who would have done what he did. I was a little over nine years old at the time, but the impression deepens with me the older I grow that the finest manhood is expressed in the thought that

## LAYING FOUNDATIONS

the greatest saints have the largest possible definition of the words, wrong and right, responsibility, sin, forgiveness, and the great words which make up the sum total of human destiny. As long as such souls exist we need not fear for the salvation of the world."

In November, the third year after Mr. and Mrs. Ward came to Yankton, their first child, a son named Wood, was born; and about two years after that a daughter, Ethel. In the meanwhile, after that first winter in the home of Mr. Fuller, they had begun housekeeping in a little frame house on Third Street, now the main business street of the town, afterward moving to a house on Picotte Street, where both of these children were born. And now, in the fall of 1873, their own beautiful home on Mulberry Street was approaching completion. But the happy anticipation of the new home was overshadowed about a month before they moved into it by the death of Wood, their firstborn.

They buried the body on the Stewart Sheldon farm northwest of the town, and later on, when the farm was sold, Mr. Ward with his own hands removed the remains to the Yankton cemetery. The sorrow of the parents over the loss of this firstborn son was unusually deep and lasting. Of Mr. Ward himself it was observed by members of the family and those intimate with him that "he was never quite the same after that." Joseph Ward possessed the mind of a mystic and a poet. The sense that heaven lies about us in our infancy was with him a deep element of religious

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

feeling. He thought of children as divine spirits newly come from God. But in this experience of Wood's death, following as it did a gradual and painful decline, the sense of divinity came with other associations than those of brightness and joy. "In his sickness," Mr. Ward says, "I learned more than I ever knew before of the divine mystery of suffering and patience. . . . As I watched him fading away and saw his earthly life go out it seemed as if the very divinity of our Lord entered into him, and so Christ was incarnated once more. . . . I do not mean to say that he was so much more noble than other children. He was no more than any son is to his father, but he was far in advance of me."

In similar vein of mystic faith may be quoted the following passage from a sermon of about this time on the text, "Children are an heritage of the Lord," where the thought expressed is a kindred poetic thought of motherhood. "Every mother who will receive it may from the very first hear the voice, not of an angel, but of Christ himself, bringing her as sweet an annunciation as Gabriel brought to Mary. The Holy Ghost may come upon *her*, and the power of the Highest may overshadow *her*, because her child as was Mary's may be called the 'Son of God.' "

In November, 1873, Mr. and Mrs. Ward moved into their permanent home. The building of that beautiful house was a wonderful event in Yankton. It was the gift of Mrs. Ward's father, who believed that a refined and dignified mode of liv-

## LAYING FOUNDATIONS

ing, even on the frontier, was proper to the position of a Christian minister, and that the maintaining of such a home and its hospitality would exert a beneficent influence upon the community. It was a brick house, ample in dimensions and dignified in architecture, with interior finished in modest elegance and provided with modern conveniences. No house since built in Yankton has equalled it in character; it was in fact such a home as would have graced one of those fine elm-shaded streets in an old New England town. In the Yankton of that day it looked lonely and strange enough, off on the prairie as it was; for Mulberry Street was then far "out of town," and there were no other houses near nor trees to obstruct the view in any direction. In locating the house where they did, just as in locating the church out on the prairie at Fifth Street, fully four blocks from the steamboat landing (a proceeding which was strongly condemned by many people), they showed their characteristic faith in the future of the town.

There are those living in Yankton to-day who remember with enthusiasm the wonderful "house-warming" that was held when the family moved into the new home, and the great dinner that was served, and how every workman who had had anything to do with the building of the house was present—and conspicuously the hod-carrier and his little girl.

The Ward home belongs to Dakota history. Its hospitality is a fixed tradition in Yankton. It is safe to say that most of the well-known charac-

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

ters of Dakota in territorial days have at one time or another been entertained there, as well as most of the distinguished visitors from the East who came to Yankton from time to time. Their door was open to all who came, rich and poor alike. Neighbors tell how the old Sioux City stage was so accustomed to landing a guest or two at the Ward home that the horses, when the driver would be drowsing, would stop at that gate anyway from force of habit. Most frequent of guests were ministers and missionaries, newly come from the East and bound for the up-river country, or travelling to and fro on their work. All such pilgrims found here the "Palace Beautiful," where they were lodged and feasted in Christian love and fellowship, and sent along their way with encouragement and Godspeed.

Four other children were born to Joseph and Sarah Ward, one of whom, Paul Jabez, 1878, died at birth. Of the living children, Ethel Tufts Ward, the eldest, is the wife of Edward D. Gray, and resides with her family in the old Ward home at Yankton. Donald Butler Ward holds a responsible position as secretary of a large liability insurance company with headquarters in Boston, and resides in that city. Freeman Ward is an associate professor of geology in Yale University. Sheldon Ward is engaged in the ranch and cattle business in Perkins County, South Dakota. Margaret Ward, the youngest of the children, is at present studying for the profession of trained nurse, in Newton Hospital, Newton, Massachusetts.

CHAPTER VII  
IN YANKTON FROM 1873 TO 1881



## CHAPTER VII

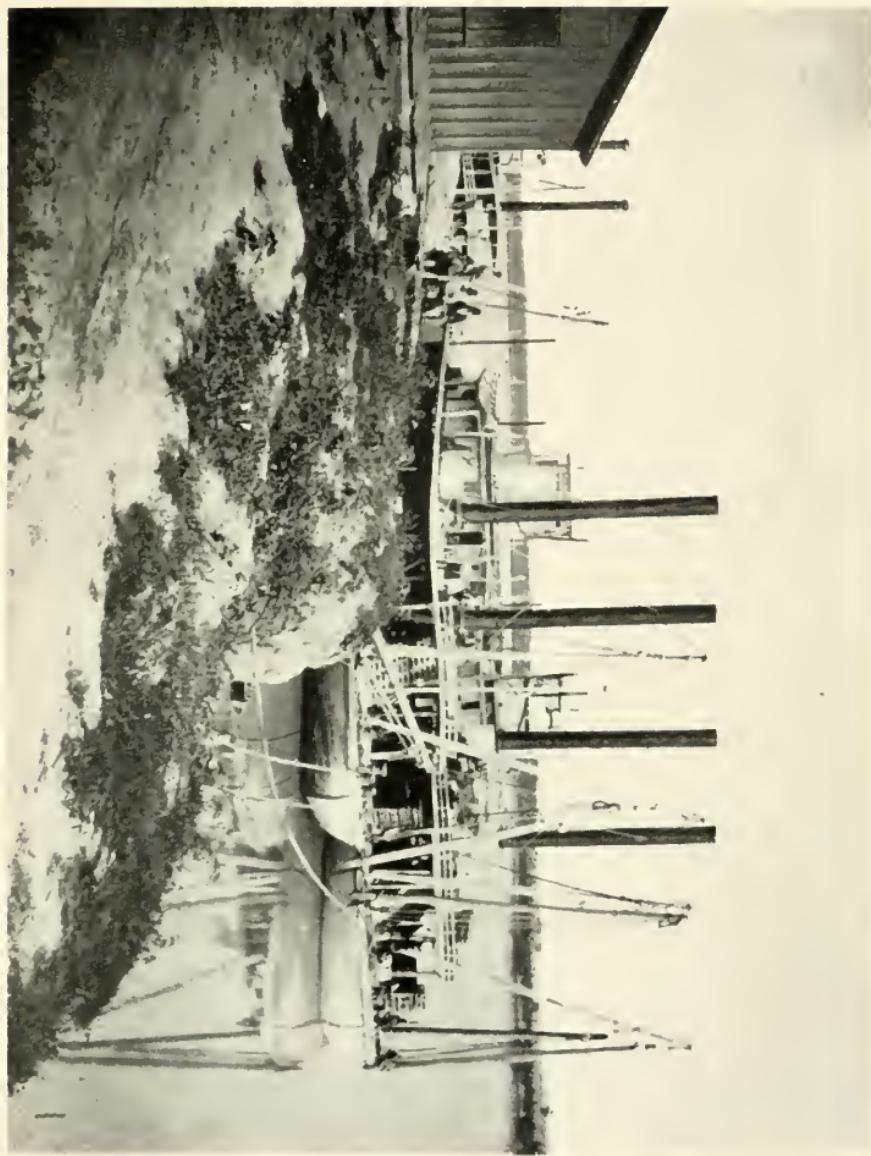
### IN YANKTON FROM 1873 TO 1881

**M**R. WARD'S work was all along so vitally related to the development of Yankton and of Dakota that the main events in the history of town and Territory must be continually kept in mind. Early in the year 1873 the long-awaited Dakota Southern Railroad was completed into Yankton from Sioux City, the first railroad to penetrate the borders of Dakota Territory. To Yankton in particular that event marked the beginning of a new era of growth. The capital city had already made rapid gain in population, and was the centre of a large trade with settlements along the river and in the interior, but by the coming of the railroad the place became in a new and larger sense the gateway city of Dakota. From now on the railroad traffic for the up-river settlements, Indian agencies and military posts no longer terminated at Sioux City but at Yankton, and Yankton instead of Sioux City became the initial depot for the steamboat lines engaged in up-river transportation. Steamers no longer merely touched at Yankton in passing, but started there, loading at the Yankton levee their cargoes of private and government freight for a thousand miles of up-river country—hundreds of tons in a

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

single week—and on their return unloading there also their shipments of ore and bullion from the Montana mines, and buffalo hides from the hunting ranges of the Upper Missouri. One of the early large impressions at Yankton of the new order of things was the arrival by rail in April, that year, of Gen. George A. Custer and his Seventh Cavalry Regiment, enroute for service at a military post on the upper Missouri on the line of the opening of the Northern Pacific Railroad. The regiment encamped on the flat just northeast of town, were caught there in a terrible spring blizzard which raged for thirty-six hours, and remained in Yankton for three weeks before embarking for their up-river destination.

The new impulse at Yankton was further heightened when the discovery of gold in the Black Hills was proclaimed in 1874. The citizens of Yankton immediately saw their opportunity to establish their city as the gateway and outfitting depot for the grand rush to the Hills which was sure to come. On the very evening after the gold report was received (August 13) the citizens "assembled a great mass meeting and began an elaborate propaganda to advertise the Dakota gold-fields, and Yankton as the gateway, to the world. Flaming posters were printed setting forth the advantages of the route by which Yankton could 'be reached in parlor cars, thence on palatial steamers over the Missouri River to Fort Pierre, and thence a three days' drive in sumptuous stage coaches directly into the heart of the diggings.' This Yankton movement was far in



STEAMBOAT DAYS AT YANKTON



advance of any other and attracted the attention of all the gold-fevered world."

The following spring Sioux City was in lively competition with Yankton, endeavoring to establish an overland route to the Hills by a south-of-the-river detour of their rival city, through Nebraska, which the Yankton promoters loudly ridiculed as the "sand-hill route" of monstrous toil and trouble as compared with the magnificent luxury of the Yankton steamers and Concord coaches. The earlier stage of all this sort of effort proved abortive, for the Government had not yet secured the consent of the Sioux Indians to the cession of the Black Hills, and premature parties of gold-seekers either lost their scalps at the hands of the Indians or were arrested at the hands of the military and left to repent in prison. But it was only a question of a short time when it was no longer possible to hold back the gold-hungry thousands; military opposition to entry somehow slipped out of sight, and the great rush was on—with a tragic reckoning still to be made with the real proprietors of the Black Hills. As the rush finally came, Yankton gained the day over her competitor down the river, and became the accepted gateway to the marvellous Eldorado of Western Dakota.

To the leading church of Yankton and the Territory, and its minister, these days of transient crowds and excitement and swift expansion brought their own opportunity and responsibility. Mr. Ward labored on behalf of sound and substantial foundations in the upbuilding of the country.

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

He appreciated as thoroughly as any Yankton citizen the material prospects of the town, and as time went on became himself one of the most active promoters of business and municipal enterprises. Yet in those times he recognized the particular danger of the haste to be rich. He preached against the spirit of speculation and exorbitant rates of interest and tricky ways of trade and the repudiation of county bonds, and whatever shifts and expedients in private and public business would tend to sacrifice honor and character and stability for the sake of momentary gain. Such subjects he dealt with in a very specific and direct way and with visible results. Mr. Ward recognized that the importance of the Black Hills movement was highly exaggerated. He foresaw that Yankton's future and that of the Territory at large would after all rest mainly on the solid basis of agriculture rather than upon mines of gold and silver. To those sturdy settlers who were patiently cultivating their claims, and sticking by them through stress of drouth, and winter blizzards, and grasshoppers, and Indian scares—to them he rendered praise as the real founders of the material future of the country. This idea of *growth* was a favorite theme with Mr. Ward, that steady and substantial growth, in things material, mental and moral, which comes as the result of time and faithful cultivation. "In all good things *time* is an essential element," is a saying of his that gives the note of much of his preaching in those days of rush and excitement.

The strength and influence of Mr. Ward's church, as exerted upon these years of swift immigration, may be inferred from a few facts relating to the year 1875. The growth of the Church had kept pace with the rapid growth of the city. Yankton in 1875 numbered over three thousand inhabitants, and the membership of the Church had increased to 103. The Church had maintained now for three years its independence of Home Missionary support, and had become noted far and wide for its large contributions to foreign and home missionary causes, and for its direct financial aid to pioneer churches and Sunday Schools that had been started in other places. There were now fourteen Congregational churches in the territory, and the example of the Yankton Church in self-support and missionary benevolence was a shining admonition to all these, an example which is known to have influenced older churches in other parts of the West to adopt a similar course. And this large missionary giving on the part of the Yankton Church was not out of its abundance but out of its poverty. For notwithstanding the fact of swift immigration and considerable transient traffic for Yankton, it was a period of hard times. 1873 had been the panic year, and the movement into Dakota and even the rush for gold had been driven forward by disaster in the East. Pioneer farmers in the territory were struggling against grasshoppers and drouth. In the summer of 1875 the black cloud of grasshoppers swept over Dakota with such wide and terrible destruction that a large effort

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

for charitable relief was organized and appeals were made in eastern cities on behalf of the destitute settlers. So it was not a time when money was plentiful, and it was only by means of splendid missionary inspiration and willing self-denial that Mr. Ward's church was able to accomplish what it did, and exert its ever widening influence upon the growing commonwealth. Mr. Ward's realization of the far-reaching results of the work the Church was doing is expressed in the following passage from an anniversary sermon of 1875 reviewing the history of the Church. "What we have counted up," he said, after having presented the facts and figures of the Church's remarkable growth, "is the smallest part and of the least value, but all the rest is recorded, and indelibly, in the lives of thousands who have in one way or another come into contact with this Church. We are working on hundreds that we have never seen. We are helping to shape the lives of many more than have their names on our roll. The sum total will appear one day when the judgment is set and the books are opened."

This vision of far-reaching results was characteristic of Mr. Ward. So it was that in the work of his ministry he placed unusual emphasis upon the religious training of children, by that means laying sure foundations for the future of the Church. There was not only earnest and thorough work in the Sunday School, but there was carried on in connection with the Church a remarkable missionary society for children, known as the Willing Hearts. This society met

every other Saturday afternoon with Mr. and Mrs. Ward at their home—more than fifty children thronging the rooms of the big house and full of happiness to the brim. There were various kinds of fun, with stories about the people and the children of foreign lands as interesting as any fairy-tales; and then a part of the time would be devoted to the making of beautiful and useful articles of handicraft, Mr. Ward teaching the boys and Mrs. Ward the girls in their respective departments of work. In the month of June the accumulated products of the year's industry, interspersed by bright and attractive articles from the East sent for the occasion by Mrs. Ward's friends, would be offered for sale at a wonderful Missionary Fair, held at the Ward home. This was one of the most popular events of the year. Everybody in town would come to buy, and would learn something about the cause of missions withal; and the money would go to China and Japan and Africa, the children possessing a vivid sense of how much good it would do, and following it faithfully with their prayers. That society of the Willing Hearts was a training school in missionary knowledge and activity, and the effects of it can be traced in the history of the Yankton Church to the present time.

To build thus for the future in the lives of children was for Mr. Ward as simple and natural as breathing. His remarkable gift with children is something that everyone remembers who knew him. He was one of those good friends whom children came to know as an expert at mending

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

a broken toy or at binding up a wounded heart. He had an inexhaustible stock of good stories, many of them about Indians that he himself had seen, and was a capital reader of his favorite "Uncle Remus" and other good stories from books. It was because he knew children so well that he was able to touch in them with remarkable power the springs of the religious life. He preached to them effectively. In the course of revival meetings he labored especially to convert children and bring them into the Church. At such times he was wont to invite them to come to talk with him in his study at home, and many came. As a result of his experience in those hours of heart-to-heart confidence with many children Mr. Ward came to believe that their religious capacity was greater than usually realized, and that the church ought to make far more of its opportunity in dealing with them.

Another of Mr. Ward's undertakings on behalf of the children, to which he devoted a great deal of thought, was the composing of a children's catechism. This was not by any means done in a sectarian spirit; but he had come to believe through experience with children that instruction of that kind was needed, particularly at that period of his ministry, when many new families of foreign nationality and all degrees of education were coming into the Church. His catechism presented a form of belief very moderate in its orthodoxy, and expressed in kindly and simple language adapted to the minds of children.

The sectarian spirit, it should be said, had no

place in Mr. Ward's nature; and his religious influence was not at all confined within the bounds of his own denomination. He respected the religion of every man, whatever his station or creed; and he was so broad in his ideas and sympathy, so ready in practical charity and friendship, that all kinds of men loved him and believed in him. It is remembered that there were Catholics in Yankton who always called him "Father Ward." And the story is told of how the Catholic priest one time became disturbed because numbers of his people were frequenting services in Mr. Ward's church, and wrote to Bishop Ireland desiring a special mandate to prohibit his parishioners from going there. It happened, however, that Bishop Ireland and Mr. Ward, both being statesmen and having a common interest in the development of Dakota, had become good friends, so Bishop Ireland wrote back to the priest, saying: "It is good for your people to go and hear Mr. Ward. You had better go and hear him yourself occasionally."

From the beginning of Mr. Ward's acquaintance with Indian missions as related in the preceding chapter, he became more and more interested in that subject and in the whole Indian question, especially in connection with the conflict with the hostile Sioux along the line of the opening of the Northern Pacific, and the struggle for the possession of the Black Hills leading to Custer's awful tragedy in June, 1876, followed by the subjugation of most of the hostiles and their resettlement upon various reservations. He was

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

an ardent and outspoken sympathizer with the Indians in the wrongs they suffered through broken treaties and the frauds of Indian agents, and he was able to bring influence to bear at Washington in favor of honest administration and the appointment of good men as agents—to such an extent that he incurred the cordial hostility of men who were profiting by fraud in Indian affairs. Mr. Ward realized more than ever the value of Indian missions in promoting the peace and safety of the frontier, and felt the necessity of extending that work now that settlement was reaching farther up the Missouri and its tributaries, and west of the river into the country of the recent conflict. In the summer of 1878 Mr. Ward served as secretary of a government commission, composed of General Stanley, Major Hayworth, and the Rev. A. L. Riggs, which visited the great chiefs, Spotted Tail and Red Cloud, up the river, and negotiated with them the location of their tribes at the mouth of the Rosebud and at Pine Ridge, respectively, where they have ever since remained. In the following spring Mr. Ward became actively interested in the cause of the exiled tribe of Poncas, who, in the redistribution of tribes following the Sioux war, had been removed by the government from their old home by the graves of their ancestors on the Missouri River, against their will and in violation of treaties and promises, to far-away Indian Territory. It seems that many of them were dying there from disease or sheer homesickness, and that a few had attempted the journey back to the North,

## IN YANKTON FROM 1873 TO 1881

only to be captured by soldiers and forced to return to Indian Territory. This cause of the exiled Poncas aroused sympathy and indignation in all parts of the country. Mr. Ward, deeply moved by these events, took a leading part in interceding with the president and Congress at Washington on behalf of the Poncas, being supported by Missionaries Riggs and Williamson and others, and by numerously-signed petitions from Yankton and elsewhere, and enlisting in the cause the aid of his friend Governor Howard, then at Washington. In response to such efforts and public sentiment East and West, the government appointed a commission to secure such relief as might be possible for the Poncas, but the original blunder proved irretrievable and the return of the tribe to their old home could not be brought about.

On account of Mr. Ward's understanding of the Indian people and of the conditions and needs of work among them, he was offered the appointment under the American Board to the position of Field Secretary of Indian Missions. The work strongly attracted him, and he would have accepted the appointment had it not been for the affectionate protests of his church at Yankton. This was not the only position of large importance and responsibility that was open to Mr. Ward, in the West and elsewhere, during his pastorate of the Yankton church, but no other appears to have tempted him in the least.

Mr. Ward's position in Dakota as the untitled

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

leader of the denomination was indeed great enough. In the National Councils of the Church he had become a well-known and prominent figure, where it used to be said that Joseph Ward and Dakota were synonymous terms. On the subject of home missions and of Indian missions he had become a leading authority, and not only with reference to Dakota but to the West at large. The heads of the societies of the denomination in the East were accustomed, as the files of his correspondence show, to consult him in the appointing of men to missionary service in Dakota, as well as in various important questions of plan and method in their western work. Mr. Ward was in touch with all the new churches which the Rev. Stewart Sheldon was starting in the frontier towns, watching over and encouraging them with fatherly care. With his knowledge of Dakota, his grasp of the missionary situation, and his enthusiasm for that cause, Mr. Ward sometimes found himself in disagreement with the policies of the missionary societies in charge of the work, with their offices in the East, so far away from the field of action; he was impatient with this remoteness of official control, and what seemed to him at times a lack of appreciation of the needs of the mission field in the swiftly-developing empire of the West; he believed that the churches themselves ought to be placed more directly in touch with particular missionary fields and made responsible for them. On these questions and others he conferred and corresponded much with leading men of the





THE FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF YANKTON

## IN YANKTON FROM 1873 TO 1881

Church in the East, and was an active contributor to the periodicals of the denomination.

Mr. Ward's influence in public affairs was increasing during these later years of his Yankton pastorate, making ready for the important part he soon was to play in the statehood movement. He was capable of exerting a powerful influence throughout the Territory, not only on behalf of education but of any good cause. One of the early governors of the Territory said of him: "Ward has more influence than any other man in Dakota. He can do just what he pleases with its people. They call me governor, but I have not a tithe of his power here." His personal acquaintance, based upon these many years of contact with the work of missions, extended to all parts of Dakota. Moreover his residence at the capital gave him acquaintance with all of the federal officials and prominent men of the Territory. A considerable number of these were members of Mr. Ward's church; in fact, from the membership of that church a great deal of what is most important in early Dakota history originated. At the Ward home important legislation was discussed and framed by informal groups of such men, or by regular committees of the legislature assembled there.

An important event in Dakota history of this period, connected with the name of Joseph Ward, was the founding of the Dakota Hospital for the Insane at Yankton in 1879, of which he was president of the first board of trustees. This institution, the first of any kind to be owned and con-

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

ducted by Dakota Territory, was an achievement of the administration of Governor Howard, Mr. Ward's intimate friend and a member of his church. Governor Howard, who had been member of Congress since 1854, was now giving the closing years of a lifetime of honorable public usefulness to devoted service as governor of Dakota Territory. In founding the Hospital for the Insane Governor Howard lent his own personal credit to the Territory in order to make possible that necessary institution of public charity, and advanced the actual funds to provide the first temporary buildings for the housing of the patients.\*

Reference must not be omitted to one other event which occurred about the close of the period we are now considering. This was the great flood of the spring of 1881. It was an immense disaster, sweeping away millions of property all along the Missouri and tributary streams, blocking all traffic for weeks, and causing fearful suffering from exposure and destitution all along the valley above and below Yankton. This was the time when that beautiful village of Green Island, opposite Yankton, sharing the fate of everything else on the bottom lands, was swept out of existence forever, the spot where it then stood being now in the middle of the swirling

\*Governor Howard died in 1880, beloved by all Dakotans. General Beadle says of him: "He was the most unselfish man in public life I ever knew, and we have had many such." A biographical sketch of him by Dr. Ward was published in "The Monthly South Dakotan," Vol. I, p. 94. "To citizens of Dakota," Dr. Ward writes, "he will always stand as the model governor, 'without fear and without reproach.' "

channel of the stream. Father Seccombe's church at Green Island, which was the fruit of the work Mr. Ward had done there at the beginning, was lifted from its foundations and carried away. Crowds of people in Yankton from the tops of buildings saw it float off down the stream, the steeple careening and the bell ringing as it was struck by masses of ice, until it tipped completely on its side and floated on to where it lodged in the timber by the limestone cliff on the other side below Yankton. Watchers on the shore saw people clinging to the roofs of houses that were being swept along, and others on swiftly-moving cakes of ice, and others lodged in the tops of trees. All along the river settlements there were performed daring deeds of rescue by men who drove their skiffs for miles and miles through the perilous floes of ice. One of the Yankton heroes of the flood was Deacon E. C. Dudley, of Mr. Ward's church. Mr. Ward himself was secretary of a strong relief organization which was formed at Yankton for the aid of flood sufferers. This organization, under the direction of its general committee, composed of Ex-governor Edmunds as chairman, Mr. Ward as secretary, Acting Governor Hand, Mayor J. R. Sanborn, and Judge Bartlett Tripp, and nobly aided by the women of Yankton, brought swift and effective relief to hundreds of destitute families for considerable distances up and down the river.

That year, after the waters subsided, the drenched soil everywhere produced marvellous crops, and Dakota boomed as never before.

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

The two movements which were of culminating importance in the life of Joseph Ward, the founding of the College and the founding of the State, had already begun, but these must be taken up in succeeding chapters.

CHAPTER VIII  
THE FOUNDING OF YANKTON COLLEGE



## CHAPTER VIII

### THE FOUNDING OF YANKTON COLLEGE

**T**HE closing period of Joseph Ward's life, from the founding of Yankton College in 1881 to his death in 1889, coincides with the period of the struggle for statehood and its final achievement, in which cause he was a leading figure from first to last. It will be expedient for the sake of clearness to separate from now on in our narrative these two lines of activity, taking up for the present chapter the subject of the beginning years of the College, and reserving for the chapter to follow an account of his connection with the statehood movement.

The priority of the founding of Yankton College is a significant fact. It was the first institution of collegiate grade, not only of South Dakota, not only of the two Dakotas, but also of the immense region of the Upper Missouri Valley included in the original Dakota Territory of 1861, and of limits even beyond those. This fact, together with the high position which the Institution has maintained from the beginning to the present time, is in accord with the record which the Pilgrims and their descendants have made in relation to higher education in this country. They

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

founded Harvard, the first college in the New World, in 1636, Yale in 1701, Dartmouth in 1769, Bowdoin in 1794, Amherst in 1825, Oberlin in 1833, Beloit in 1846, Iowa College in 1847, Washburn in 1865, Carleton in 1866, Colorado College in 1874, together with more than a score of others all along the way. And now Yankton, in 1881, farthest to the northwest on the new frontier, was added to the honorable roll of colleges of the Pilgrim planting.

That this first college should be founded under the leadership of Joseph Ward was the natural outcome of what had gone before. "Yankton College began," as he said himself, "with the first Congregational church of Dakota; for out of that church came Yankton Academy, and from the Academy came the first public school system of Dakota, and then Yankton College, with not only the same spirit pervading them all, but the same men actually carrying on the work. The trustees of the Academy became the first Board of Education, and later a large majority of them were trustees of the College. So was carried out the instruction of Dr. Badger, who in the first commission to the pastor of the Yankton Church, enjoined him to 'see to it that the cause of Christian education be vigorously carried on in the great Northwest.'" Mr. Ward had taken the lead in each of these steps, and the last and most important one, the founding of a Christian college, had been in his view from the first. He began to talk on the subject even in the earlier years of his ministry, and it is remembered by

## THE FOUNDING OF YANKTON COLLEGE

some of the older residents of Yankton with what astonishment they first heard his proposal of setting up a college in that wild and sparsely-settled country where Indians and buffaloes were still the main occupants of the land. But Mr. Ward possessed an extraordinary sense of the importance of beginnings made while things were new, together with the vision of a prophet, which saw beyond the meagre present the splendid empire of the future. Persistently he urged the project upon the attention of the Congregational churches, until at length the General Association, in a session held at Canton, May 20, 1875, took the first formal step by appointing a College Committee. "This Committee," says Dr. Ward, "was continued as one of the standing committees of the Association, reporting progress each year, until the meeting in Sioux Falls in October, 1880, when all felt that the time had come to go forward. There were at that time twenty-nine churches in the Association, with a total membership of 641. Only one of these churches was self supporting. . . . There was not a penny from the East to help these feeble folk, and yet they went on bravely, being mercifully kept, as we always are, from knowing the full weight of the burden they had assumed." But the state of the times seemed now to invite the taking of that step. The period of the largest homestead immigration into Dakota had now begun. The Chicago and Northwestern Railroad was building across the central prairie to the north, opening up an immense fertile region hith-

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

erto unsettled, and with the coming spring and summer there was to be a bigger influx of population than had yet been known.

The step having been resolved upon, the first immediate question was the location of the proposed institution. The Association appointed a special meeting for this purpose to be held at Yankton, January 12, 1881. The meeting occurred in the heart of the severest winter yet known in Dakota, the winter of the great snows preceding the flood. Roads were in fearful condition; it was only the utmost devotion to the cause that brought together the considerable number that were present. It was there voted to locate the college at Yankton, "yet not to be in undue haste in so important an action, and to give opportunity to the newer churches that were then fast coming into life, the Association adjourned till May 25, to meet at Canton and again consider the question. Here again, coming together through vast floods, as in January they had braved deep snows in their hundreds of miles of travel, the brethren spent three days seeking the divine guidance for the final settlement of the question, 'Where shall we locate our college?' Without a dissenting voice, the same decision as before was reached, and Yankton was chosen as the place."\*

There was soon formed a corporate organiza-

\*Joseph Ward and Ephraim Miner drove together from Yankton to attend that Canton meeting, a distance of seventy-five miles. At the Vermillion river they swam their horses behind a skiff across the swollen stream, floating the buggy over on the skiff.

## THE FOUNDING OF YANKTON COLLEGE

tion, under the laws of the Territory, for administering the affairs of the new institution. The incorporators were to constitute a self-perpetuating body having general control over the College, but the immediate administration of its affairs was to be entrusted to a board of nine trustees, to be elected by the Corporate Board from its own membership. The provisional Board of Trustees, as elected by the corporation at a meeting held in Yankton, August 2, 1881, was composed of the following gentlemen: the Rev. Joseph Ward, of Yankton; the Rev. Stewart Sheldon, of Yankton; E. P. Wilcox, Esq., of Yankton; the Rev. Lucius Kingsbury, of Canton; the Rev. Charles Seccombe, of Springfield; Ex-governor Newton Edmunds, of Yankton; the Hon. Ephraim Miner, of Yankton; the Hon. John R. Jackson, of Valley Springs; and the Hon. Josiah R. Sanborn, of Yankton. According to the Articles of Incorporation eleven professorships were to be ultimately established, covering the field of a broad and sound curriculum of collegiate study. The charter of the College as a private corporation under the laws of Dakota Territory was granted August 30, 1881.

The organization of the College had been carried thus to completion mainly as a work of faith. The enterprise was supremely characteristic of Joseph Ward, whose rule of action in all affairs was to first make sure that a thing ought to be done, in other words that God wanted it done, and then to *begin* doing it at once, having no doubt as to its ultimate success. So in the starting of Yankton College all there was of tangible sub-

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

stance in hand was a building-site of twenty acres on what is now known as College Hill, and eleven thousand dollars in money, as given by the town of Yankton to secure the location. Nine thousand of the money had been contributed by members of Mr. Ward's church, "given," as they assured him, "only to gain the privilege of giving more bye and bye." The first thing needed therefore was more money, and that fall the Trustees resolved to set about immediately the raising of twenty-five thousand dollars. Before this maiden quest was begun, however, a public gathering was held on Sunday, October 30, on the bare bluff north of town designed for the campus of the forthcoming college, and the ground consecrated to the cause of Christian education. An auspicious circumstance of that occasion was the presence of a group of young ministers known as the "Yale Dakota Band," recently come to Dakota to begin their career, and resolved as one part of their mission to aid in the founding of a Christian college. These gentlemen were Messrs. C. W. Shelton, A. B. Case, J. R. Reitzel, W. H. Thrall, P. B. Fisk, P. E. Holp, and W. S. Hubbard; and very faithfully, in one capacity and another, they lent their support to the undertaking now begun.\*

\*The members of the Yale Dakota Band brought with them from the East a silver dollar, which had been sent to Dakota as the first dollar toward the founding of the first college in that new country. Rev. James L. Hill, D.D., of Salem, Massachusetts, was the donor, and he kindly sends me the following account of the incident:

"When the South Dakota Band having held a meeting in New Haven, held one also in Boston, they made addresses on Monday morning before the Ministers' Meeting, and I gave them a silver dollar, saying that a college would inevitably

## THE FOUNDING OF YANKTON COLLEGE

The task of raising funds, which afterwards, when Mr. Ward was elected to the formal headship of the Institution, fell mainly to his hands, was at first shared by others. The Rev. Charles Seccombe, who had been from the first a strong advocate of the cause, and others, were associated with Mr. Ward as a committee to solicit funds. The Rev. C. W. Shelton, of the Yale Dakota Band, was appointed a regular financial agent, and made a trip through the East, meeting with considerable success. But in April of the following year Mr. Ward's church voted to give him a release of six months from pastoral duties in order that he might present the cause of Yankton College among the churches of the Territory, and as far as thought best to friends in the East.

The beginning was encouraging enough. He went first to the church at Vermillion. "I did not expect much there in the way of money," he writes, "as the church was washed away in the great flood of a year ago and every one of the members lost very largely of private property in the same way. The little of the town left by the flood was removed to the bluff. Other buildings were erected. A new and beautiful church was

---

come of their work and this was the first dollar toward it. An account of this was printed in "The Advance," which I have. Later Mr. W. B. D. Gray brought the dollar East, and threw it into my lap, saying that it was the first dollar given to the College and was found in President Ward's desk after his death. My father gave the first dollar to found Iowa College and this fact suggested to me the gift of the first dollar to Yankton College. The account of this gift of the first dollar to Yankton appears in "The Advance" of May 5, 1881, proving the date of the gift to have been about Monday, April 25, 1881."

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

built costing \$1700 and recently dedicated. There was no general notice given of my coming, so that many did not know it until they came to the church Sabbath day. I read the first chapter of Joshua, and drew a parallel between the work and history of the Jews, and that done by the Pilgrim Fathers and yet to be done by us and our children in taking possession of this land in the name of Christ. One way of doing this is to establish Christian schools and colleges, to be maintained and endowed by Christian men and women. Then I told them briefly what had been done and what we wished them to do. *First*, to give their prayers. *Second*, their children. *Third*, books—at least one good book from each home. *Fourth*, money, both in cash in hand and promises to pay.” The result, in the fourth particular of Mr. Ward’s request, footed up to \$166.34, “a most cheering beginning,” he concludes, “in this work which I have taken up very reluctantly.”

That scene at Vermillion gives the keynote of all of Joseph Ward’s work. In his soliciting for the College there was always the same unworldly spirit; with him a prayer or an encouraging word would be valued and remembered side by side with a gift of thousands of dollars. The idea, also, of establishing Christian education, and of the whole work of establishing a Christian commonwealth at the West, in the spirit of the Pilgrim Fathers, was, as we have noted before, at the very heart of all that he undertook in Dakota; and he kept in mind always that grand epic parallel back of it all, from Old Testament his-

## THE FOUNDING OF YANKTON COLLEGE

tory, of the children of Israel going forward to take possession of the promised land. Jehovah's charge to Joshua, which he read that Sabbath at Vermillion, was the passage of Scripture which Mr. Ward most frequently read in public, and which he faithfully appropriated to his own work, and to that of all those who were taking part in the upbuilding of the new western country.

*“Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, thou and all this people, unto the land which I do give to them, even to the children of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, to you have I given it, as I spake unto Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon, even unto the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites, and unto the great sea toward the going down of the sun, shall be your border. There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee; I will not fail thee nor forsake thee. Be strong and of good courage; for thou shalt cause this people to inherit the land which I swaré unto their fathers to give them. Only be strong and very courageous, to observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee; turn not from it to the right hand nor to the left, that thou mayest have good success whithersoever thou goest.”*

Following that visit to Vermillion, he went on his way rejoicing among the churches of the Territory, meeting with encouraging success, mercifully spared, as he has said, the knowledge of how this work of raising money would grow from year to year into an overwhelming burden, when no longer those easy hundreds, but the hard thou-

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

sands, and the terrible tens of thousands must be found in order to meet the necessities of a growing college.

On the afternoon of June 15, of that year 1882, was held the ceremonial of laying the corner stone of the first college building. As a prelude to the ceremony a procession of five hundred public school children, in charge of Professor Bristol, the city board of education, the mayor and city council and numerous citizens, on foot and in carriages, all headed by a band, started from the high school building, and passing along the streets and across the Rhine wound its way up the green slope of the hill on which the College was located. Each of the children carried a bouquet of flowers. A thousand spectators gathered about the excavation, at the corner of which the foundation had been built up to the required height, and around it a platform suitable for the exercises. After Scripture reading and prayer, the copper box in which were sealed the documents proper to the occasion was deposited in its place, and then the long procession of school children marched across the platform, each in turn placing his bouquet of flowers on the box. A feature of this movement that attracted general attention was the conspicuous part taken by a little colored boy, who marched at the head of the procession and dropped the first bouquet upon the box.

Then followed the address of Mr. Ward, representing the Board of Trustees, which was in part as follows:

## THE FOUNDING OF YANKTON COLLEGE

“We have asked you here today to witness that we pledge, as some have had to pledge before, ‘our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor,’ that this institution to-day established shall be carried on to the end of all that can be accomplished by human faith and human works, resting on and working under the blessing of God. We trust this college may be like a city set upon a hill, whose light and warmth shall reach to all around. We hope it may be like a high watch tower, from which may be gained so wide an outlook over the land that wise plans for the good of the commonweal may here be made that shall help to shape our state to the honoring of God and the bettering of man. It is not often that history can be detected in the act of doing her work. She moves so silently that her greatest deeds are not suspected of their greatness until they stand in the long perspective of time that is past. But to-day we can see her in the very act and article of her high work. Yet even this deed of to-day will take on more of beauty and power as the years go by. We shall live long enough to look back with gladness and pride to this day. These children will see its worth more than we. Children not yet born will tell the story of this corner stone and draw from it lessons for the encouragement of those who are to come after them —for we cling fast to the thought that this institution is to endure as long as the hill shall last and the river run.” \*

At about this time, June, 1882, the degree of

\*From “The Yankton Press and Dakotan,” June 16, 1882.

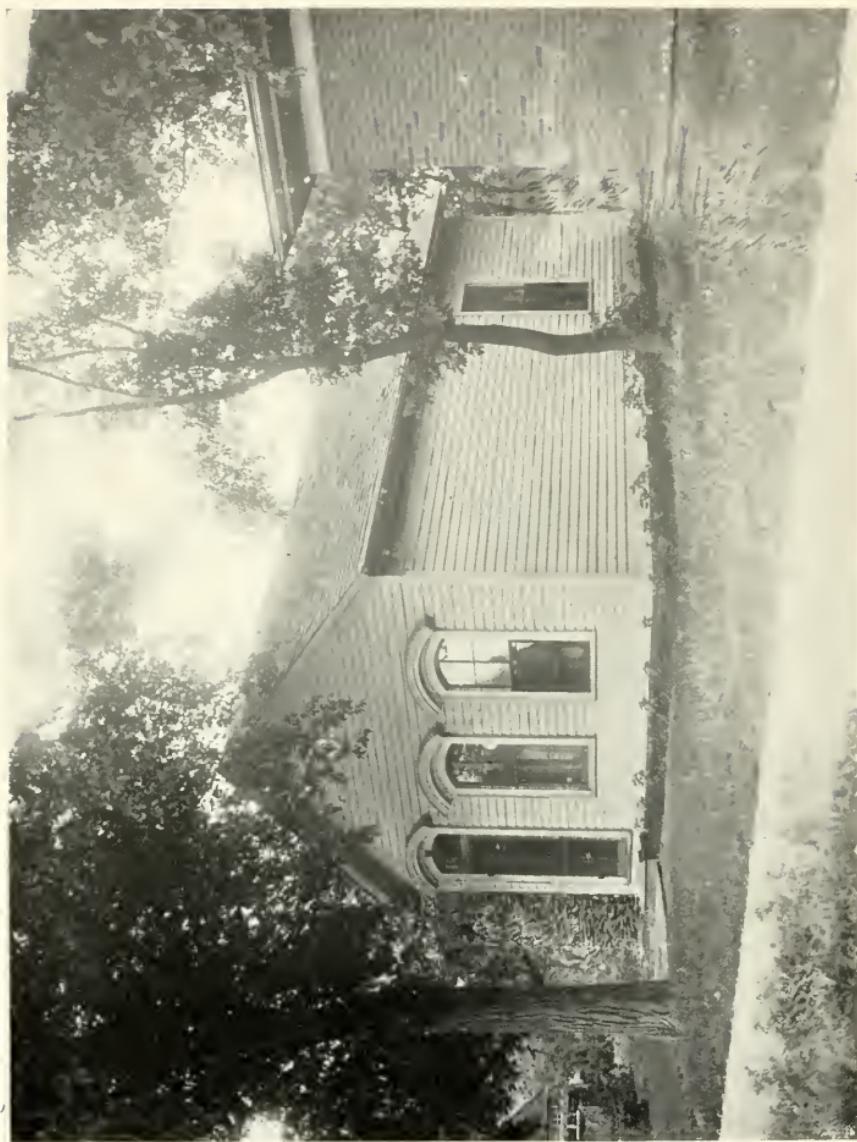
## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

Doctor of Divinity was conferred upon Joseph Ward by Knox College.

A little later in the summer Mr. Ward, continuing his quest for funds, made the first of his many pilgrimages to New England on behalf of the College, taking Mrs. Ward and the children with him to make their temporary home with relatives there while he was about his work—as he did frequently thereafter. “My work in New England for the College has only just begun,” he writes—scarcely realizing how large a truth he had stated. Here, too, the beginnings were bright. He was among friends who had known him long, and had watched his work growing in Dakota for these fourteen years. In fact Mr. Ward’s influence in the East had been recognized from the first as the main hope of the College, and the circle of his own and Mrs. Ward’s relatives and personal friends formed the nucleus of the financial constituency which he gradually built up for the Institution. Jottings in his notebook of this trip read very pleasantly. For instance: “Met Mr. —— and went with him to Auburndale, his home, and spent the night. He was already partly posted about our college. Before I went to bed he gave me his check for \$250, which was a blessed preparation for sleep. This morning he sent me to Mr. ——, who received me very kindly.” . . . . “Dr. L—— gave me \$5 for the Willing Hearts Fund, and prayed for those ‘willing hearts’ very earnestly.” \* . . . .

\*The Willing Hearts had undertaken the raising of \$1,000 to found a scholarship in Yankton College, keeping up at the same time their contributions to foreign missions.





BEGINGN OF THE COLLEGE  
Rented Building used in 1882-'83

## THE FOUNDING OF YANKTON COLLEGE

“Deacon —— promised me \$1,000 before the end of the year. I hardly had time to get my breath to thank him before he was gone.”

The appointed time had now come for starting the actual work of the College. The building which had been begun on College Hill was not ready for occupancy until the following fall, 1883, and consequently the first sessions were held in the chapel of the Congregational Church. Work was there begun October 4, 1882, with five pupils present—the first young men and women in Dakota to enter upon a course of higher education in a home institution. The names of those who began as students of Yankton College that first morning are: William P. Dewey, Jr., of Yankton; Edward D. Disbrow, of Akron, Iowa; Edgar M. Hand, of Yankton; Jennie D. Ketchum, of Yankton; and Lena McGlumphy, of Yankton. For that first year the work of instruction was carried on by Professor William M. Bristoll and his wife, Mrs. Rosa O. Bristoll. This is one of the facts which mark the continuity and organic development of the educational enterprises which Dr. Ward carried forward in Yankton, for Professor Bristoll had first been appointed as principal of the Yankton Academy, and afterward, from the reorganization of that institution into the public high school, as effected under Dr. Ward’s leadership, had continued for eight years as Superintendent of Schools in Yankton. He and his wife now took up, with “great faithfulness and patience under the trying conditions incident to the beginning of things,” the work of the new

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

college. Soon after teaching was begun, the infant institution was removed to a small building of three rooms on Walnut Street just south of the Church, which it continued to occupy during the first year.\*

The original enrollment of five students increased in the course of the year, reaching the very respectable total of forty-one. One of that company, writing some years afterwards in reminiscence of that Year One of Yankton College, tells how Dr. Ward in conducting the chapel services "read out of a little old leather-covered Bible; and Professor Bristoll played upon the little wheezy old organ, now in the Congregational chapel. Right after chapel-time the first class that ever studied Goodwin's Greek Grammar in Yankton recited; and that class worked as hard as any class in Yankton has worked over their Greek. Virgil was read all the year by the Senior Preparatory Class."†

At a meeting of the Board of Trustees held January 16, 1883, the following resolution was adopted:

*"Resolved, First, that in the opinion of the Board the time has come for choosing a president for Yankton College.*

*"Second, that Rev. Joseph Ward, of Yankton,*

\*This historic building was afterwards removed to a lot on Cedar Street, one block west, where it still stands.

†Professor McMurtry, in his "History of Yankton College," quotes the above reminiscence, and adds: "It seems that on one point the writer of the above was mistaken; because Rev. Charles M. Sheldon states that he himself constituted a class of one which began the study of Greek in the Yankton High School, at a period preceding the birth of the College."

## THE FOUNDING OF YANKTON COLLEGE

is the man we need and desire for that position; and that we, therefore, unanimously invite and urge him to accept the position, and to enter at once upon his work."

Dr. Ward's acceptance of the presidency of the College involved his resignation as pastor of the Yankton Congregational Church, which occurred May 13, 1883. In the fourteen years of his ministry the Church had increased in membership from 14 to 234. From first to last the most conspicuous fact in the life of the Church had been that devotion to the cause of missions to which attention has already been drawn. This faithfulness to the work of missions was what Dr. Ward regarded as the charter of existence for any church, and it had been unquestionably the main source of that remarkable growth and power which his own church had achieved. Now the time had come when he must lay down the work which he had carried forward with such fidelity and success for all these years. Nothing could exceed the love of the people for their minister, but the call of the College which their own hands had so largely helped to create was in a sense their own call to him, and they now gave him over to that cause to which they had already pledged their faith.

The ensuing summer Dr. Ward was occupied with preparations for the enlarged work of the College which was planned for its second year. A faculty of seven teachers was now engaged. Among these were the Rev. E. C. Norton, who was made professor of Greek and instructor in

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

Mathematics, and the Rev. John T. Shaw, who was made professor of Latin and principal of the Preparatory Department. Professor Norton was a graduate of Amherst and had pursued post-graduate study at Johns Hopkins, and Professor Shaw was a graduate of Brown University and Andover Seminary. Both were young men of character and ability, and were destined to have a large share in the early development of the College. In securing such men as these, Dr. Ward held out no "advantages" in the worldly sense, but the privilege of sharing with him in hardship for a worthy cause. "We are in a struggle," he wrote to Professor Shaw, "and need the hearty and self-sacrificing co-operation of every one of the faculty. The salary is a thousand dollars. It may be that this cannot all be paid the first year, but it will be paid in time." The course of study laid out for this second year embraced, in addition to preparatory courses, a complete college course of four years, abreast of the standards at that time prevailing in the old and well established colleges of the East. Departments of Music and Art were also started, a substantial beginning of a library was made, a valuable collection of geological and mineralogical specimens was given to the College by the Dakota Scientific Association, debating and declamation contests were instituted, a student's Christian Association was organized, soon developing into separate Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations affiliated with the regular National Associations. The first year, as we have noted, there

## THE FOUNDING OF YANKTON COLLEGE

was a total enrollment of forty-three. The second year one hundred eight were enrolled, of whom seven were classified as freshmen in the college course.

President Ward's dream was thus passing into substantial reality, including, it must be remembered, an increasing budget which had to be provided for—but that is a subject which lies within the province of a later chapter.

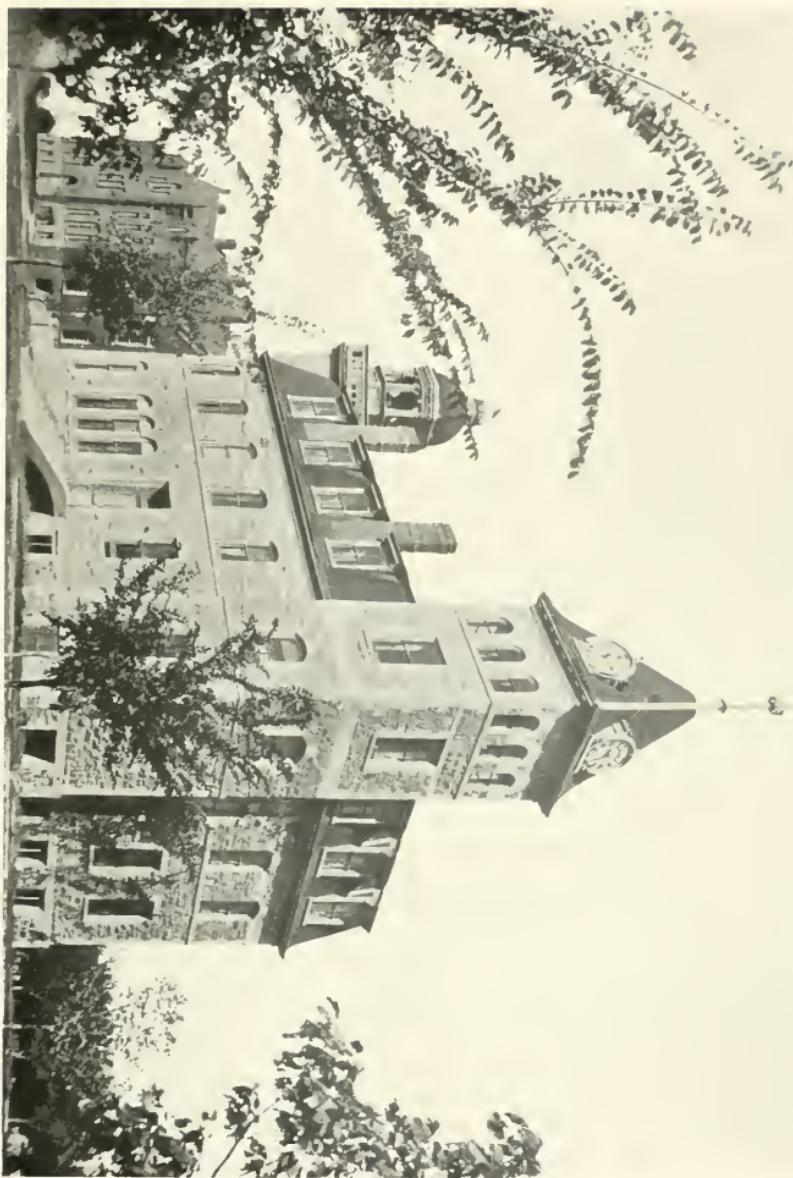
During the summer of 1884, the new building, which had been in use throughout the preceding year in an unfinished condition, was carried to completion. It was a handsome and substantial structure, built of Sioux Falls jasper, three stories and basement, with a dome-shaped bell tower at one corner, and a clock tower with spire at the other. It occupied a site at the top of "College Hill" overlooking the town, and commanding a superb view of the Missouri River and its broad valley for miles and miles, and the bluffs of the Nebraska shore. For a number of years this single building was "The College," the third floor serving as dormitory and scientific museum, and the basement as dining hall, while the first and second floors embraced all else—recitation rooms, library, and chapel.

The new building was dedicated with impressive ceremony at the opening of this third college year of 1884-5, and in connection therewith was held the formal inauguration of President Ward. It was one of the most notable occasions in the history of the College. In order to bring the actual beginnings and the future prospects of

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

the Institution as strongly as possible before the minds of the churches, it was arranged to hold the annual meeting of the General Association of Congregational Churches simultaneously with the dedicatory exercises; and never before had the Association meeting been so largely attended. The "Dedicatory Address" for the College was given by Dr. Ward's classmate and friend, Professor W. J. Tucker, D.D., of Andover Seminary, afterward President of Dartmouth College; and other notable addresses, appropriate to this event of extraordinary historic significance, were given by representatives of the Board of Trustees, of the College Faculty, and by others, including Chief Justice Edgerton, representing the Territory, who bore eloquent testimony to the value of such an institution to the future of the Commonwealth. The inaugural address of President Ward expressed in memorable words that Pilgrim ideal of higher education which was the growth of his own character and training. So broad and sound were the conceptions he presented that the address might well stand as a sufficient justification for the existence and continued maintenance of institutions of that type. The following paragraphs, which have been selected for quotation by Professor McMurry in his "History of Yankton College," well indicate the spirit of the address:

"If a college did nothing else in this Western land than, by its sharp contrast with eager haste for wealth and power, to show by its quiet, patient, long-continued following of something



THE FIRST COLLEGE BUILDING

Erected in 1883



## THE FOUNDING OF YANKTON COLLEGE

that did not immediately pay, that life had another and possibly a wiser interpretation, this result alone would justify all that is done to build them up.

“Is it a small thing to turn a man or woman aside from mere gain to the building up of character? Is it nothing to train up citizens that can find no temptation in wealth to make them neglect duty? Is it wasted time to fit men to do things thoroughly, just for the sake of doing them, even though they may never be paid ever so remotely for it?

“What can be nobler than to found an institution that, by the simple force of its daily life, shall go out among the young and call each one to a higher life than he could have found without it!

“Least of all can Western colleges afford to lower the standard and let the clamor for something practical make them reject the ancient standards. Not for the sake of being as good as Eastern colleges, least of all to tamely copy them, but for the sake of sterling honesty, to build up genuine character, to stand in the breach against the trading, mercantile spirit, to develop a race of men that are willing to work and wait, and having done all to stand, must we have an ideal that is hard, not easy to reach. Everything is raw and crude. Our towns run wild. It was not mawkish sentiment that made Matthew Arnold say that America dreadfully needed some old ruins. He felt that our intense life of the present needed to be balanced by looking to the past.”

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

This upholding of the personal and ideal element in education, this emphasis upon intellectual discipline for its own sake, and upon the humanities, in a broad sense of the term, in a practical and commercial age, is what has chiefly distinguished the position of the college in this country from that of the university, and of the professional and technical school. Its power is maintained through personalities rather than through organization and material means. That famous definition of a college as "Mark Hopkins sitting on one end of a log and a student on the other" expresses its spirit.

It was according to this pure ideal of the function of the college that Joseph Ward created this first institution of higher learning in the Upper Missouri Valley; and so deeply did he impress his personality and ideals upon its beginning years that the Institution in its growing life since then has been consciously and continuously faithful to the purpose of the founder.

The motto which Dr. Ward chose for the college was, "Christ for the world," and the well-known hymn from which the phrase is taken was adopted as the College Hymn. Upon the basis of this phrase, "Christ for the world," were formed the familiar verses which are inscribed on the college bell. They were written by Dr. Charles M. Sheldon, and under the following circumstances. During the years in which the College was being started and the first building erected, Mr. Sheldon was attending Andover Theological Seminary. An eastern friend of the

## THE FOUNDING OF YANKTON COLLEGE

Institution had just contributed the money for the purchase of a bell. At the time when the order had been given and the bell was about to be cast, Dr. Ward happened to be at Andover. It occurred to him that it would be desirable to have an appropriate inscription upon the bell; and so he called in his nephew, then attending the Seminary and of some reputation for literary gifts, and told him what he wanted—some verses for the bell to accord with the motto already chosen for the College. Mr. Sheldon sat down with pencil and paper, and in a few moments had composed some lines, which he handed to his uncle. These seeming to Dr. Ward not quite satisfactory, Mr. Sheldon tried again, and presently produced the following:

“At morn, at noon, at twilight dim,  
My voice shall sound, the earth around,  
Christ for the world, the world for him.”

Dr. Ward said at once, “Those are just right,” and so that beautiful legend was inscribed at its casting upon the college bell.

Dr. Ward seems to have been determined to impress this sentiment upon the life of the College. He himself before his death drew a sketch for a college seal, which long after was brought to light and adopted—a design showing an open book, above it the cross shedding its radiance upon the page, and below it the words of the motto, “Christ for the world.”



## CHAPTER IX

### THE STRUGGLE FOR STATEHOOD



## CHAPTER IX

### THE STRUGGLE FOR STATEHOOD

IT is a point that has been lovingly inscribed in the history of South Dakota that the movement for statehood, that great patriotic struggle to gain the people's liberties, had its virtual origin at a certain Thanksgiving dinner, where were assembled a group of men who were destined to become the inspirers and leaders of that movement. It occurred at Yankton, in the year 1879, at the home of the Rev. Stewart Sheldon, brother-in-law of Joseph Ward. The guests there assembled were Dr. Ward, the Hon. William A. Howard, governor of the Territory, Gen. Hugh J. Campbell, United States Attorney for Dakota, Gen. W. H. H. Beadle, Territorial Superintendent of Public Instruction, Mr. E. P. Wilcox, Mr. H. H. Smith, and perhaps others. They were a group of congenial friends, and all of them, it may be remarked, members of Dr. Ward's church. The occasion was one after his own heart, like many another gathering about the hospitable board in his own home, where friendly talk was turned upon some proposal of large importance. At that memorable observance of the Pilgrim day of Thanksgiving, the plans were discussed and the initial steps resolved upon which resulted in the

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

admission of South Dakota into the Union, and the victory of those important issues which were involved in the statehood movement.

In order to understand the course of events thus initiated, in which Dr. Ward played so important a part, it must be borne in mind that there were two great issues associated from first to last with the cause of securing admission into the Union. The first was the division of the Territory into two states; and the second, the enactment in the constitution of the proposed state of South Dakota of a certain measure for the protection of the public school lands as set apart by the Federal Government for the endowment of public education in newly-created states. These issues, Division and the School Lands, in this movement inaugurated by Dr. Ward and his associates, were inseparably bound up with admission itself. On a different footing the cause of constitutional prohibition was also promoted along with the statehood effort, and was finally successful.

The opposition to the admission of Dakota into the Union was an instance of the familiar evil of partisan advantage set over against popular rights. Dakota was republican in politics, and Congress was in control of the Democratic party. In this is implied no disparagement of the Democratic party; had the condition been reversed, a democratic territory seeking admission from the Republican party in power, the opposition would probably have been the same. This partisan opposition was naturally all the more determined

## THE STRUGGLE FOR STATEHOOD

against the division of the Territory and the admission of *two* republican states. Under these circumstances the question of division became a great vital issue in the whole movement. Had the people of the South been willing to have the Territory come into the Union as one state, the struggle for admission might not have been prolonged until 1889, as was the case. But the people of Southern Dakota, under the influence of the movement now started, became so thoroughly aroused and determined in their demand for separate statehood that admission without division would certainly have been refused even to this day.

It may readily be seen why the movement for statehood had its origin and chief strength in the south, and why that portion of the Territory so strongly demanded admission as a separate state. The south, or more particularly the southeast corner of the Territory, was the region of earliest settlement and largest population. The people of that part inherited the main traditions of pioneer life and struggle in Dakota, and they had become united by ties of political, educational, and religious organization which were the growth of many years. The chief industry of the southeastern section was small farming and stock raising. This southeast corner was virtually the original "Dakota," and in relation to it the other sections of the Territory were recent, isolated, and different in character. The Black Hills to the West, which had been but newly settled in the gold-rush of '77, was dominated by the mining interest and

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

its population of a particularly unstable and adventurous class; the northern region, developed by the Northern Pacific Railway, was the land of bonanza wheat farming carried on by big land owners, an agricultural country of a different type from the south. The Black Hills, although considered for a time as a possible third division of the Territory, eventually joined hands with the southeast, thus forming of the entire portion south of the 46th parallel the new state of South Dakota. It was in the southeast, then, that the idea of statehood naturally arose, and with it the idea of division. Yankton, the old territorial capital, birthplace of the movement and source of chief influence from beginning to end, has been aptly called "the cradle of Dakota's liberties."

Dr. Ward, it might be thought, would have his hands full in the building of a college, without giving time and strength to general public interests. But this cause of the people's liberties appealed powerfully to his patriotism, and he saw largely involved in it those interests of religion and education to which he had set his hand. As missionary and educator the vision of the future state had inspired his thinking and planning from the first. He had come to feel most keenly the condition of dependence in territorial citizenship; and to believe that the territorial system of the United States was thoroughly wrong in principle, and had been developed and maintained largely as a means of rewarding partisan workers with political office. He wrote and published a strong argument on the proposition that "To hold any

## THE STRUGGLE FOR STATEHOOD

part of our country as a Territory, is a violation of the fundamental principles of our growth, is contrary to our history, and is dangerous to our national life."\* Moreover Dr. Ward was a strong believer in Division. He was closely identified with the history and spirit of the south, which so naturally looked toward separate statehood. But, furthermore, he believed in the smaller state as a matter of principle. "He was emphatically a people's man," as his friend Judge Campbell said of him, "favoring everything that looked toward honest, free and fair government. He was deeply versed in New England polity, and was a profound believer in the fundamental and most fruitful principle of New England political institutions, local self-government; small communities, such as the township, as the unit of political administration and legislation, a numerous representative body, and small states. He believed in small states for the reason that they brought the government closer to the people, were more economical, and less easily bought and controlled by corrupt means than large states. Hence he earnestly favored the division of this large territory into two states."†

The other chief issue connected with the statehood movement in the plans now formed, the safeguarding of the school lands under the constitution of the proposed state, was naturally a vital interest in the mind of Dr. Ward. This im-

\*"The Territorial System of the United States." by Joseph Ward. "Andover Review," July, 1888.

†Memorial Number of "The Yankton Student."

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

mensely valuable endowment, consisting of one-eighteenth of the public domain within newly-admitted states, as set apart by the Federal Government for the support of public schools\* had already suffered damage by trespass, and stood in a far greater danger of waste and loss through fraud or premature disposal when it should pass into the control of the new state. Dr. Ward, who, as we have seen, had been the leader of the educational movement in the Territory since the early years of his residence in Dakota, had long before discussed with territorial officers this particular question of the protection of the school lands, having before his mind the vision of a magnificently endowed system of public education for the future state. In the statehood movement, as now set on foot, Gen. W. H. H. Beadle, at that time Territorial Superintendent of Public Instruction, brought forward and advocated with great vigor throughout the Territory the cause of the school lands, centering about the particular provision that the constitution of the future state should forever forbid the sale of any public school lands at less than ten dollars an acre. Gen. Beadle advanced a strong argument from the results of an investigation he had made of the history of school lands in other states, showing a record of shameful loss and fraud in the management of those lands. Of Dr. Ward's early and hearty espousal of the school land measure Gen. Beadle

\*In the case of Dakota this land set apart for the benefit of common schools, not counting that reserved for normal schools and university, was an area larger than the entire state of Massachusetts.

## THE STRUGGLE FOR STATEHOOD

gives ample testimony in his "Memoirs." "Dr. Ward," he says, "was my first convert, if indeed he required conviction at all and had not always thought substantially the same way." And again he makes particular assertion, in regard to starting that movement, that Dr. Ward was an early supporter of the school land plan long before the time when it was taken up along with the general plan for statehood at the Thanksgiving dinner in 1879.

Such, then, was the general situation with regard to statehood, and to the great issues of Division and the School Lands as discussed at that memorable Thanksgiving dinner. On that occasion, Judge Campbell, who became the great legal mind of the statehood movement, proposed the constitutional theory which was thenceforth, under his championship, to become the fighting basis for the struggle for admission, to wit, that according to ordinances of Congress relating to the rights of inhabitants of newly-acquired territory of the United States, and the precedents of the action of other territories, notably Michigan, in establishing state government, the people of Dakota had the right and the power of taking the initiative in the matter of forming a state government, without waiting for the passage of an enabling act by Congress; and that the people of southern Dakota could, by united popular action, separate at a stroke the councils of the north and the south, destroy the power of the political combination which opposed division, and begin a separate state organization.

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

Here, it was agreed, was the ground for a people's movement. What had been done in the interests of statehood hitherto had been through ordinary political channels, memorials to Congress by the territorial legislature, and attempts by the territorial delegates in Congress to secure the passage of an enabling act, authorizing the institution of a state government—steadily opposed as we have seen by the Democratic party in power. The plan now formed by Dr. Ward and his associates was to organize a coherent and powerful body of pledged supporters to the Division and Statehood cause, through which public opinion in southern Dakota could be aroused and united in the direction of independent action. The first step taken was the formation of a league of Statehood Clubs in a number of communities in the southern half of the Territory, whose business it was to engage public interest in the movement for Division and Statehood, and to awaken discussion of various important issues, including prohibition, and above all the great question of the school lands, related to the forming of the constitution of the future state. The idea of this effort was that the people themselves, not Congress, nor the politicians, should say what kind of constitution they would have.

This movement of the Statehood Clubs, initiated by Dr. Ward and his co-workers, was the definite beginning of the struggle for statehood, and the organization developing from them, known as the Citizens' Constitutional Association, remained the core and chief motive power in all

## THE STRUGGLE FOR STATEHOOD

that followed after. Dr. Ward with his acquaintance and standing throughout the Territory was undoubtedly the largest single influence in forming and developing that organization. General Beadle declares that the whole moral force of the people was with the Citizens' Constitutional Association, and pronounces it "the most meritorious non-partisan public movement ever begun in the West," pointing out that the measures promoted under that organization "powerfully influenced the constitutions of Montana, Washington, Idaho, and Wyoming, and later Utah, especially upon the subjects of education and the school lands, for the principles which we urged with so much vigor in South Dakota were afterwards incorporated in the enabling acts of all those states."

Governor Howard, of that Thanksgiving group, the good governor, "without fear and without reproach," did not live to see the development of these plans, to the initiation of which he gave his earnest and able support. Dr. Ward, General Beadle, and Judge Campbell were leading figures in the struggle from that time on. The movement in the course of time drew to itself nearly all the ablest men of the Territory, many of whom became conspicuous in the cause, the more so in its later stages. But it remained the people's cause, and the unique relation of these three men, jointly and severally to the movement, is duly recognized in the history of the State, and is deserving of honor by all South Dakotans.

The movement of the local clubs, under the Cit-

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

izens' Constitutional Association, made but slow progress for the first two or three years. Being an independent people's movement, most of the active politicians gave it the cold shoulder, and the press of the Territory deprecated or ignored it. The strong sentiment for prohibition which the movement carried with it inevitably tended to handicap the broader objects in view. Moreover, the strenuous position taken on the question of the school lands met with strong opposition in certain quarters. Nevertheless Dr. Ward and his fellow-promoters persisted in their efforts, and gradually gained support for the cause among the people. It was under their organization, the Citizens' Constitutional Association, that the first of the series of statehood conventions was assembled, at Canton, June 21, 1882. A bill for the passage of an enabling act was at that time pending in Congress, and the purpose of this convention, as expressed in the call issued by the executive committee, was to focus general attention upon measures to be considered in forming the future constitution. Ten counties only were represented in this initial assembling of the people, by delegates elected under the auspices of the local clubs. Not much attention was paid to it in the newspapers. The report of it in the leading daily of the Territory\* was patronizing and sarcastic in tone, remarking among other things upon the conspicuous proportion of ministers in attendance, the evident moral bent of the meeting, and the fact of a coincident convention of the

\*"The Sioux Falls Press."

## THE STRUGGLE FOR STATEHOOD

W. C. T. U.\* The convention was under the ban of the politicians. It was only in the light of subsequent events, and the persistence and spread of the popular sentiment that was back of it, that its historic importance was realized. It was out of this first general assembly of the people that the subsequent statehood and constitutional conventions grew in logical succession, and the spirit of this first gathering as an independent, popular, and moral movement was largely infused into all that followed it.

Dr. Ward was the prime mover in this first convention, and the report of the Committee on Resolutions, of which he was chairman, written manifestly by his own hand, set forth the purpose and significance of the convention in language which has the ring of prophecy.

“The gathering is the more notable,” he says, “because the call did not come from any well-known or long standing organization. Nor did the delegates come with any hope of political advantage. On the contrary those who came had to do so almost in defiance of party rules and in many instances with a threat hanging over them of being read out of the party in case they did attend. Nor is it easy to find a precedent in our national history for such a gathering. We had no bitter wrongs to rehearse; we had no griefs to tell; we were not driven to come together by any outside pressure. It was simply a gathering of the people to shape by friendly counselling together, the form of the State government under

\*“The Sioux Falls Press.”

which we are to live and our children are to be born. It is not boasting to say that in subsequent generations men will quote the work of to-day as similar to that done by the Pilgrims in the cabin of the Mayflower when they put their names to the compact which was afterwards expanded into the Constitution of Massachusetts. For did not we lay the foundation of the State when we put upon record the careful conviction of 194 men, coming from both great political parties, from various ranks of society and from all parts of the State, as to what in their opinion should be the shape of the Constitution? It is not a small thing to hear the voice of the people as thus given—telling that they are awake to the value of our future school fund; that they are on their guard against the encroachment of monopolies; that they are fully persuaded that extravagant expenditure and consequent high taxation and ruinous indebtedness of state and municipality, can and shall be avoided; that the liquor traffic and its attendant evils is a subject for constitutional restraint. In short the whole work of the convention has demonstrated as never before that the people are sovereign; that political parties are only convenient forms for carrying out the wishes of the people; that the people are at any time stronger than any and all parties; that if occasion arise they know perfectly how to act and are perfectly ready to act for themselves—not under the name of any party, but simply as the people."

That splendid utterance may fitly stand in the

## THE STRUGGLE FOR STATEHOOD

annals of South Dakota as the declaration of the people's independence and the prolog to that movement which really made the constitution and the State.

The report of the Committee on School Lands and School Funds embodied fully the provisions for safeguarding that trust, including the ten-dollar-an-acre clause, as framed by General Beadle, and as steadily advocated by him in public addresses, newspaper articles, and other means of propaganda throughout the state.

Dr. Ward was chairman also of the Committee on Permanent League or Organization, which laid the plan of The Dakota Citizens' League, to develop and extend throughout the state the work that had hitherto been carried on by the original "local clubs," and to endeavor to unite the people of the state in support of the statehood movement as now begun, and of those provisions in the future constitution which the Canton convention had declared for. The statement of the purposes of the Dakota Citizens' League as prepared by this committee concludes as follows: "Finally, people of Dakota, we say to you, remember that nothing that is good grows of itself. Good constitutions are no exception to this rule—you cannot expect a good constitution to be framed unless you, yourselves, work to make it good. What we want is a constitution for the benefit of the people, not for the benefit of the politicians. If the people get such a constitution the people themselves must make it. They cannot with safety leave this work to others. Any plan which

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

will interest the whole people in making their constitution will secure a good constitution." \*

The Executive Committee of the Dakota Citizens' League, of which Dr. Ward was a member, took steps at once looking toward the formation of state government. To that end they prepared a bill for a Constitutional Convention for the meeting of the legislature the following winter. The Committee promoted the passage of the bill through the legislature, but the measure was then killed by the veto of Governor Ordway. If impulse to united action had been lacking before it took hold of the movement now. That action on the part of the governor "set the prairies aflame," and aroused public sentiment against carpet-bag government and in favor of statehood as never before. That legislature, as led by Governor Ordway, created territorial institutions that were not needed, passed extravagant appropriations, and adopted an iniquitous scheme of capital removal, "putting the territorial capital on wheels to be hawked over the territory and knocked off to the highest bidder." At that hour of universal indignation, a time which doubtless marked the height of corruption in territorial politics, the Dakota Citizens' League, as the one existing organization which represented the people of the state, was called into prominent action. The Executive Committee, probably at Dr.

\*This passage from the report of Dr. Ward's committee does not seem to the writer to be in the style of Dr. Ward, although the thought is exactly his own. The extract from the report of the Committee on Resolutions, as quoted a little above, is unmistakably the language of Dr. Ward.

## THE STRUGGLE FOR STATEHOOD

Ward's proposal, issued a call for a Statehood Convention to be held at Huron, June 19, 1883, to prepare at once for the formation of a constitution, and to declare to Congress the right of the people to act for themselves in preparing for statehood, without waiting for an enabling act of Congress to bestow the condition of statehood upon them.

One notable provision of the Committee's call for the Huron Convention was that the question of Prohibition, which had been prominent in the discussions at Canton, should be relegated to future and separate action, in order not to handicap the main purpose of securing statehood. Dr. Ward was back of this provision, and, earnest Prohibitionist though he was, he consistently, throughout the statehood movement, opposed the desire of zealous temperance workers of the state to force the question of Constitutional Prohibition as an issue bound up with Statehood itself. His policy was to win all the forces of the state to the one cause of statehood, reserving the question of Prohibition for separate action.

The occasion was ripe, now that the call for the Huron Convention had been issued, for vigorously promoting Judge Campbell's doctrine of the right of the people to independent action in the forming of the State. At the formal request of Dr. Ward and many statehood promoters of Yankton, Judge Campbell now prepared a pamphlet fully setting forth his views, which was widely circulated throughout the proposed state. From this time on the famous "We are a State"

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

idea profoundly influenced the minds of the people everywhere, and it became the accepted principle of action at the Huron Convention and the constitutional conventions which followed it.

The Huron Convention, held June 19, 1883, made manifest the great momentum which the Statehood Movement had now gained. It was a large and dignified gathering of the most prominent men in the state, in which nearly all the counties were represented. It maintained the non-partisan and purely patriotic character of the whole course of effort that led up to it and its deliberate and statesmanlike proceedings were notable proof of the ability of the people of South Dakota to assume the function of self-government. The Convention solemnly declared the right of the people under the Constitution of the United States and the inviolable guarantees of treaties, ordinances and laws of Congress, to proceed in the formation of a new state, and framed a very complete and careful ordinance providing for a constitutional convention and the formation and adoption of a state constitution. The constitutional convention was appointed to be held at Sioux Falls, on the 4th of the following September, and exact provisions were made for the apportionment and election of delegates, together with all necessary particulars according to full form of law. Dr. Ward at the Huron Convention was chairman of the Yankton County delegation, in this as in all the conventions the most influential of the county delegations. He was a member

## THE STRUGGLE FOR STATEHOOD

of the Committee on Resolutions, and first vice-president of the Convention.

The Sioux Falls Constitutional Convention, of September 4, 1883, was formed as we have seen by direct authority of the people, independent of act of legislature, or enabling act of Congress. This convention framed a worthy organic law for the future state. It embraced excellent provisions against graft and corporate corruption, for the control of railroads and of state and municipal indebtedness, along the line of those ideas which Dr. Ward and the original promoters of the Statehood Movement had brought into general discussion through the Dakota Citizens' League. In this convention Dr. Ward, as member of the Committee on Education and School Lands, was largely instrumental in securing the enactment of the splendid school land law, to which he had given all the strength of his influence from its inception, which had been endorsed by the Dakota Citizens' League, and which General Beadle had been advocating throughout the State since the beginning of the Statehood Movement.

This constitution of 1883 was adopted by a vote of the people in November of that year. But Congress declined to recognize the proceeding in any way, and the matter for the present was dropped.

At the meeting of the legislature of 1885 the Statehood men were successful in securing the passage of an act authorizing a constitutional convention, which effort had failed two years

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

before through Governor Ordway's infamous veto. Dr. Ward's name stands at the head of the memorial presented to that legislature by a group of leading citizens of Yankton County, praying for the passage of that act. The memorial renews the irrefutable arguments of the right of the people to proceed in the formation of a state government without an enabling act of Congress. It also cites the fact that at that time the long-sought enabling act, which had passed the senate but a few days previously, "lies buried in the House where it will never be considered," and declares that determined action at this time "will be backed by the public sentiment of the entire Northwest without regard to party. . . . . The issue will be so plainly one of justice against injustice, of popular rights against partisan advantage, that the Democrats will be constrained to admit Dakota on her application, or at least to pass the necessary enabling act." The purpose is here expressed in the memorial to the legislature of pressing the question of Dakota's admission into national politics. But the Democratic party continued to resist the demand of the Dakotans, until in the presidential election of 1888 the Republican party made the question an issue of the national campaign, in which the Democrats went down to defeat.

Granting the prayer of the memorialists, this legislature of 1885, passed an act authorizing a Constitutional Convention to be held at Sioux Falls, September 8, of that year. The popular movement now at last had the sanction of terri-

## THE STRUGGLE FOR STATEHOOD

torial law, although the convention proceeded still without congressional enabling act. In determining the choice of delegates to this, as to the earlier conventions, the original popular organization, in which Dr. Ward had been the chief influence from the beginning, was largely influential, and for that reason the Convention was closely responsive to the people's will in all its action. The constitution framed by this convention was the one which ultimately was adopted as the constitution of the State of South Dakota. It followed the constitution of 1883 in the main, with elaboration of various details and strengthening of important safeguards. While the calling of this convention, independently of an enabling act of Congress, had been in accord with the principle which Judge Campbell had so completely established in the people's minds, the convention, by majority vote, declined to go the full length of the original "We are a State" plan of action, being content to frame a constitution, provide for the election of a full set of state officers, but there to pause, awaiting the authorization of Congress before setting the machinery of state government in actual operation.

Dr. Ward, as member of the Committee on Education and School Lands, was powerfully influential in securing the passage of the school land law, as drafted by General Beadle, which had been kept to the front as a great issue in all the Statehood Movement. General Beadle, who, although not a member of the convention, was

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

present at that gathering and sat with the Committee on Education and School Lands as its secretary, has related to the writer the really critical struggle by which that splendid measure was finally passed in the Constitutional Convention. The crucial point in the measure was the clause forever prohibiting the sale of any public school lands at less than ten dollars an acre, to which there had been strong opposition from the first. There were rumors of a speculative syndicate that hoped to secure possession of school lands at a low figure. Pettigrew, Territorial delegate to Congress, urged two dollars and fifty cents an acre as high enough, and set down that figure in the enabling act which he was seeking to have passed at Washington. There was unquestionable need of early help from the proceeds of these lands for the upbuilding of the public schools in the new state, and many believed that so high a prohibition as ten dollars an acre would defer too long that help. In winning the victory for the measure in the Constitutional Convention, the real battle was fought, according to General Beadle, in the Committee itself. The situation was such in the Convention that the passage of the measure could be assured only upon a unanimous report of the Committee. Yet the Committee at first was by no means agreed in favor of the measure. It was due largely to the work of Dr. Ward as a member of the Committee, and particularly to what General Beadle praises as his "power of harmonizing men," that the Committee at length reported unanimously in favor

## THE STRUGGLE FOR STATEHOOD

of the measure, whereby it was successfully carried in the Convention.

In this Convention Dr. Ward was Chairman of the Committee on Arrangement and Phraseology of the Constitution. He was member also of the Committee on Seal and Coat of Arms, and to him we owe the splendid Puritan motto of the State, "Under God the People Rule." \* Just as the College motto, "Christ for the World," represents Dr. Ward's ideal of education, so the motto of the State, "Under God the People Rule," represents his ideal of democracy. The legend is significant also as expressing the spirit of that people's movement which made the State, a movement notably religious in temper, and powerfully inspired by belief in the people's rights.

The constitution formed by the Sioux Falls Convention of 1885 became eventually the Constitution of the state of South Dakota. But a struggle of four more years ensued before admission was actually gained. Congress continued to set its face against the claim of South Dakota, and the conservative element within the State was still unwilling to follow Judge Campbell's program to the point of raising the practical issue with Congress by actually setting state government in operation as Tennessee and Michigan

\*A statement emanating from S. T. Clover has been widely published to the effect that this motto as originally proposed by Dr. Ward took a different form, which he was induced to alter. This statement is disproved by the original draft of Dr. Ward's report, in his own handwriting, now in the possession of the Department of History.—*Note by Hon. Doane Robinson, Secretary of the South Dakota State Department of History.*

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

had done. Nevertheless it was thought to be due to the persistence of the friends of positive action, with whom Dr. Ward sided, and the strong and growing sentiment throughout the State in favor of such action, that opposition to South Dakota's admission was at length withdrawn, at the close of the session of 1888-9. The long-sought enabling act, as then passed, provided for a Constitutional Convention to be held July 4 of that year which should merely amend and resubmit to the people of the State the constitution which had been adopted in 1885, thereby giving tardy and partial acknowledgment of the legality of that action. The people approved the constitution at an election held October 1, and on November 2, 1889, President Harrison issued his proclamation admitting North and South Dakota as separate states into the Union.

The important part which Joseph Ward played in the great Struggle for Statehood is a splendid example of pure patriotism. He largely guided that movement from first to last, yet did not seek distinction for himself in the Statehood Conventions, and had no ambition for public office in the future state. The fact that he was elected by Yankton County as delegate to every one of the Statehood and Constitutional Conventions, together with the positions of honor which he did hold in those gatherings, by no means indicates the degree of his leadership in them. Judge Bartless Tripp, the leading Democrat of the Territory and State, himself the chairman of the Sioux Falls Constitutional Convention of 1883,

## THE STRUGGLE FOR STATEHOOD

in discussing with the writer the history of the Struggle for Statehood, declared that "Joseph Ward was the prime mover in the whole thing." Such is the testimony generally of those who were acquainted with the Movement from its beginning. The influence of that people's organization, begun with the local "clubs" and continuing in widening extent in the Citizens' Constitutional Association and the Dakota Citizens' League, can hardly be overestimated. Of that organization Dr. Ward was undoubtedly the inspiring mind. General Beadle, of that original group of men who discussed plans of statehood at the Thanksgiving dinner, has gone down in history as the Father of the School Land Law, which was the best law of the kind that had ever been enacted in any new state and became the model for those states which have since come into the Union. General Beadle himself bears chief testimony as to how completely Dr. Ward's heart was in that cause, and how strongly he wrought to secure the enactment of that law. Judge Campbell, the brilliant advocate of the people's liberties, a man of splendid devotion and zeal, was strongly supported for nomination as one of the first senators from the new state, and was a man naturally ambitious of political honors. But although his abilities and patriotic labors were praised on every hand, he never gained that personal influence over various kinds of men such as would enable him to secure the nomination. His Scotch blood was full of fighting spirit; he knew not the art of conciliating his opponents.

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

All the more notable on this account is the testimony he has borne regarding Dr. Ward, with whom he was so intimately associated in the Statehood Movement. He realized, more than many another was likely to, how in that whole period Dr. Ward had probably greater influence personally with the best citizenship of the State than any other man, and at the same time held the personal regard and friendship of men of all shades of opinion during the progress of the cause of Statehood. In summing up the work of Dr. Ward, Judge Campbell said:

“To this result, no influence contributed so powerfully as that of Dr. Ward, and the phalanx of determined men with whom he acted. The small and petty influence of mere office seekers, who had neither originated nor guided the movement for Statehood, but had merely attached themselves to it for the sake of office, was insignificant in comparison with that of the great popular sentiment of the state, which Dr. Ward, more than any other man, had rallied to the flag of Statehood.

“It is a significant fact, that, at any time, had he been willing, the popular sentiment would have chosen him as one of South Dakota’s first United States senators. But he had no selfish ambitions. His sphere of duties commanded him in an opposite direction, to the sacrifice of ease, wealth, and finally life, and he peremptorily and absolutely declined to allow his name to be urged in that connection.

“As a result of his seven years’ services in this

## THE STRUGGLE FOR STATEHOOD

struggle, Yankton County stood higher and wielded a greater influence in the councils of the State, during that period, than she has ever done before or since. And South Dakota, as long as her present constitution and her free schools shall stand, will have an abiding monument of his labors.”\*

On the subject of public lands and the public schools, Dr. Ward held still further views than those which are represented in the Constitution of South Dakota. Strongly as he believed in safeguarding the magnificent endowment of public education in the future state by prohibiting the early and ill-considered disposal of any part of the school lands, he had at the same time an equally strong sense of the immediate needs of public education in the early growth of a new commonwealth. He possessed pre-eminently the spirit of a founder, with prophetic understanding of the importance of right beginnings. In an article he published in “The Andover Review,” Vol. I, p. 448, on “Government Aid to Education in the New West,” he proposed a plan by which, without sacrifice of the prospective increase in value of the school lands, there could yet be supplied that timely aid to the foundation of public schools in struggling pioneer communities which would count so much for future citizenship. This was, in a word, that the Federal Government should set apart a small portion, say one-tenth, from the proceeds of the sale of its public lands in the territories, to be granted under careful

\*Memorial Number of “The Yankton Student.”

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

supervision for aid in the establishing of public schools, the fund so loaned, together with a low rate of interest, to be repaid at such time later as the school lands of the new state should become salable at a favorable price, as duly safeguarded by the state constitution. "This would be," he argued, "an opportunity for the Government to help in a legitimate way the upbuilding of society," and at the same time save new states from the necessity, "making a temptation usually too strong to be resisted, to sell their school lands at the earliest possible moment, and as a result getting but a small part of their real value."

## CHAPTER X

### THE “TESTING” OF THE COLLEGE



## CHAPTER X

### THE “TESTING” OF THE COLLEGE

DR. WARD, instead of turning his eyes toward a high career of public service, as he might have done, chose to stand by the hard task of building the College. This chapter and the one following, covering the last years of his life, will resume and bring to a close the story of that work. To establish the institution he had called into being was the crowning labor of his life. The story is one of heroic struggle and sacrifice, leading to a tragic but victorious end. Dr. Ward said: “An institution that is to live must have life—*literally life*—put into it.” The saying was the prophecy of his sacrifice, and we shall see how it was very literally fulfilled.

His chief task continued to be that of securing funds. Dr. Ward’s faith that the College was of God meant on his part the utmost activity to provide for its growing needs. This necessitated those long periods of absence in the East, working among the churches to secure friends and gifts for the College. His methods of presenting the cause of the College were dignified and characteristic. “He thought it enough,” writes Professor Shaw, “to tell the story of the work and let the work be its own plea. He seldom if ever

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

asked for a contribution from a church. It was sometimes made in spite of him. He preferred to see in private those for whose aid he hoped, and in his quiet way present the needs of the College as an *opportunity* to those who had means to give. He never sought to tell a pitiful story. He never 'banked' on the hardships of the new enterprise."

And yet the burden of soliciting weighed heavily upon him. The task had been forced upon him, not adopted of his own choice. He would greatly have preferred to remain at home in the work of teaching, which he loved so well, and in continuous touch with the local administration of the College, instead of going on those frequent and prolonged journeys in search of funds. "My connection with Yankton College," he said in a letter to Professor Shaw, "will soon grow to be mythical and legendary, and the next generation may seriously question whether I *ever* had anything to do with it." He used to feel sometimes the keenest repugnance to the act of solicitation. "I had rather have forty stripes laid on my bare back," he would say sometimes, upon setting out to solicit someone for a gift. And again in a letter to Professor Shaw he exclaimed, "Does God require a college to be founded by begging from door to door?"

Notwithstanding Dr. Ward's utmost efforts, the gap between income and expenditure yawned wider from year to year. Attendance increased; the teaching force had to be enlarged as the work developed; expenses rapidly mounted up. The Col-

## THE “TESTING” OF THE COLLEGE

lege was in debt from the time of the erection of the first building in 1883. It was still more in debt when the next building, a dormitory for young women, was started in 1886. Dr. Ward was determined to push the work forward, as the need arose. “We decided to enlarge by engaging another teacher for next year,” he writes, in reference to a trustee meeting in 1886; “also to begin the erection of Ladies’ Hall. This is all on faith, for we have no money. In less than an hour Mr. Wilcox came in and gave me \$200, which was given him by his mother just before her death. This is a blessed beginning for our Hall.”

Blessed indeed it was, yet all this persistence in going forward on faith, had a look of dubious business. How was it all going to end?

The remarkable fact in this situation of great uncertainty and risk was that Dr. Ward was able to secure so fine a body of teachers, who caught his spirit, and believed in the College, and stayed by the work year after year, with salaries sometimes unpaid for months at a time. In more than one case offers were refused of better positions elsewhere. The members of the faculty were co-workers with him in a great enterprise. In one of his letters to Professor Shaw, he writes: “I trust that you feel that you have just as much of a divine call to help found Yankton College as I have. There is no rank in that part of the work. You are not below me, nor I above you. If we were to change places to-morrow, you would have no more responsibility and I no less. May God guide and strengthen us both.” In a letter to

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

Mrs. Ward, he says: "I do not believe another college in the land has such a united and devoted band of teachers as ours," and he reports to her of letters of loyalty and encouragement he has received from various ones. Again and again in his letters to her he pays eloquent tribute to Shaw, and Norton, and Bartlett, and Mrs. Wilder, and Swain, and others—sharers with him in hardship and sacrifice. He believed that these trials of the College were for its own good. The strain and burden of it all, as borne by himself and each one of the teachers, was the "*testing*" he so often spoke of—God's *testing* of the College to see whether it was worthy to live.

The letters he wrote to members of the faculty during his absences in the East were full of good cheer, and of interest in the details of their work. "In the midst of his activity in the East," writes Professor Shaw, "speaking in public many times each week, upon topics pertaining to all forms of Christian enterprise in the West, upon all of which his words were weighty with the authority of perfect familiarity with his subjects and of sound wisdom in their treatment, he yet found time to write letters full of practical suggestions as to many matters of detail connected with the daily work of the College. His return home seemed always to lighten all burdens and the perplexities which had gathered seemed dissipated by his presence, before they had even been stated to him." In one of Dr. Ward's letters to Professor Shaw, he says: "Your account of individual boys is exactly what I want; repeat the process always

## THE “TESTING” OF THE COLLEGE

when you write.” And again: “Talk about the discovery of America by Columbus! We are discounting that every year. That *had* to come; some other fellow would have stumbled over the continent in a few years more anyway. But this discovery of boys and girls, and making them into Christian heroes—only a Christian college can do that. Why, we are doing even more than a church. I have grieved over losing the pastor’s place, and do still; but I am finding compensation—only *I* am not doing the real work. You on the field are doing that, and I am just planting potatoes.”

Again, in some hour of unusual trial, we find him rallying one of his friends of the faculty in this vein: “I am glad on the whole you are having this occasional drooping of spirits, for otherwise I might think you were like the good boy in the Sunday-school book, about to pass away to a ‘brighter and happier sphere.’ ”

But not all the teachers stayed. Writing to Mrs. Ward in 1886 of one who had gone, and prospect of other losses, he says: “This may be the crowning of our difficulties, to have our glorious band of teachers fail us in one way or another. But after that will come enlargement, deliverance, and complete victory. Those who endure to see *that* day will have a very large reward, and those who fail, by just a little, to hold fast will always have it to regret. It is to those who hang on after *all is gone*, and make one more effort, that victory comes at last.”

*Testing, as of gold by fire, endurance, deliverance,*

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

*victory*—these were ever recurring watchwords in his letters to her.

The influence of Mrs. Ward in the work he did can never be fully expressed. Some suggestion of what it was may be gathered from the following letters to Mrs. Ward:

“Salem, Mass., Feb. 13, 1886.

“How much more thoroughly, and broadly, and permanently the College will be established by having two founders instead of one. Your words of cheer and caution and courage come to me in just the time and way I need them. I am slow in coming to some of the conclusions which you have had from the beginning. In the end we shall stand together. I wonder if any man was ever enough consecrated to have the personal element eliminated from his work. I am getting to the point of burning my ships. I am almost to the point of entire freedom from anxiety.”

She is more ready than he to risk everything in the great cause, trusting wholly in God. The “conclusions she had had from the beginning” appear to have been in the nature of a willingness to give their “all” to the College rather than have the work fail or suffer loss. Already they had given heavily to the college funds out of the modest patrimony of Mrs. Ward; considerable sums had slipped away in unfortunate business enterprises; there was really nothing at this time available except the home, which her father had built for them. Mrs. Ward was now urging that that





MRS. SARAH F. WARD

## THE “TESTING” OF THE COLLEGE

be sold and the proceeds used for the College. His own reasoning on this point appears in the course of the following letter to her:

“Salem, Mass., Feb. 19, 1886.

“I have carried in my pocket for all the time since a letter you wrote just a year ago this same Sabbath. Often and often I have taken it out to get its cheer and faith to carry me through the darkness. ‘God help you *not* to care for the name and satisfaction of getting a great sum of money for the College. Are you and I willing to give *our* all, and if God thinks best to “die without the sight” of what we most desire for Yankton College. That’s the question, it seems to me,—more faith, more consecration, more courage for us both.’ That is your ringing cry, and I have heard it and lived by it.”

Then he reasons on the question of parting with the home—which in the minds of both is what is meant by giving their “all,” so far as property is concerned. He would defer that step. “Indeed I have already made a proposal to Mr. Miner and Mr. Walker to take my part of the brick business, as the first step in being ready to be more entirely at the service of the College.” He argues that the home was given to them in the first place providentially for helping them to establish the Church, and that since then it had been still more an instrument in their hands for carrying on the work of establishing the College. “Our house was predestined for its present use. It has a dignity and character just fitted for its

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

work. . . . Now is not this our situation: we are called to this work, not to build the College, but to get others to build it. Meanwhile, until others come to the point of doing their share, we must hold things together. This we have done, and are doing, and will do, until the crisis is past. It is your money that has secured what has already been gained. To put every cent you have unreservedly into that now would not meet all the demands. But it would weaken us so that we could not hold it any longer. Are you longing to say, 'But if we give all that we have, God will raise up givers to carry it farther'? I grant that, but then we shall have put an end to our power of giving *ourselves* in actual and effective service. By keeping our house (and I use that all along as the symbol of *all* your property) we retain a position from which we can also give ourselves. We have already given enough money to act as an 'example.' If we can sell the brickyard we shall be in shape to repeat the example still more effectively."

Of Dr. Ward's personal business enterprises, to which reference has just been made, it may be said that they were characteristically of a large, hopeful, and public-spirited nature, involving borrowed capital besides his own. He was a strong promoter in these things and a great believer in the business future of Dakota. It was in this spirit that he formed a company for the manufacture of pressed brick in Yankton, and afterwards established the first electric light plant of the town. In both of these undertakings

## THE “TESTING” OF THE COLLEGE

he lost heavily. The high rate of interest which borrowers were obliged to pay in those early times he regarded as iniquitous, and he preached one very decided sermon on the subject. He was approached once on the subject of an investment in a banking business, holding out prospect of safe and rather large profit, but declined to go into it on conscientious grounds: he was unwilling to profit by the necessities of borrowers in pioneer times. He preferred to remain himself as one of the borrowing class. But none of his ventures paid, and anxiety over personal debts and losses was added to his burden of responsibility for the College.

Dr. Ward bore the increasing care and strain of his work with wonderful patience and courage. No one ever heard him complain. At meetings of the Church Associations he never spoke of the College but with cheer and hope. Moreover, in all his ways he preserved the same genial, wholesome temper of mind, and enjoyed the good things of life from day to day. This impression of Dr. Ward as a man of humorous and bright disposition should be kept in view along with the record of hardship and struggle in these later years. He always was fond of a joke or a story. No man ever entered more naturally into the fun of a company of young people. He is remembered as the prince of merrymakers among them. On his travels he was always a welcome and cheerful guest in the homes he visited, however severe the mental troubles he might be bearing. He had cosy days of rest and good cheer at his brother

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

Butler's home in Leroy, N. Y., where he usually stopped on his way to and from New England, and at Perry Centre, his old home, near by. At Andover, Massachusetts, scene of his Academy and Seminary studies, he had a circle of warmest friends, former classmates and teachers, who vied with each other in securing him as a guest. He spent much time there while in the East, and with the help of these friends found many generous givers in Andover and elsewhere. At Salem, Massachusetts, was the home of the Rev. DeWitt S. Clark, D.D., Mrs. Ward's sister's husband, where he made his headquarters from time to time. It was a beautiful, old-fashioned, brick house, covered with vines, and facing the historic Common; the interior furnished in exquisite taste, with its elegant, old winding staircase, its fine ancestral portraits on the wall, and its quantities of beautiful books. Dr. Clark's Tabernacle Church of Salem, one of the old and influential churches of New England, became a centre of strength for the College, and some of its members were among the most substantial contributors. In many another New England home Dr. Ward was entertained with the kindest of hospitality—as for instance at the Dakin's in Clinton, Massachusetts, parishioners of Dr. DeWitt Clark in his earlier pastorate at that place. Their "loving cordiality" always touched his heart. Mr. Dakin was a moderately well-to-do carpet manufacturer, who made a business of giving his money to good causes, among them Yankton College. Dr. Ward's genial sociability and humor

## THE “TESTING” OF THE COLLEGE

made him a much desired guest at many a choice festival gathering, and he was known as one of the happiest of after-dinner speakers. Not the least of his enjoyments in the course of his journeys was in making friends with children. He is always writing Mrs. Ward about the children he has met, on trains, and in homes where he was entertained. All children instinctively loved him. He was frequently in request as a speaker at Sunday Schools and other children’s meetings. “To be able to help a child,” he says in a letter to his wife, “is the most divine thing a man can do in the world.”

From this reminder of some of the pleasanter things in his experience, we must now turn to that extraordinary event, occurring in the year 1886, which proved indeed the trial by fire of Dr. Ward and the College—an overwhelming disaster, which more than any other cause bowed down that iron frame of his at last, and brought his life to a premature close.

Dr. Ward, and with him Yankton College, became involved, quite undeservedly, in the great theological controversy, which came to a focus about that time, over the so-called Andover Theology. The point upon which that intense dispute centred was the famous hypothesis, as taught at Andover Seminary, of Future Probation for infants and heathen who died without the saving knowledge of Christ. The Andover men promulgated the theory, not as a positive doctrine, but as a hope or possibility, which would help particularly to satisfy the anxious question-

ings of the heathen concerning the fate of their ancestors, who had never heard of Christ, and, according to orthodox evangelism, were irretrievably lost. It was one of those critical periods in the history of the Church when strong, earnest men have differed intensely on some point of Christian faith, involving painful and disastrous consequences. But happily the question has long ago ceased to disturb our peace, and those who are occupied with such speculations may enjoy the hopeful view without serious opposition. The Andover professors at that time rightly insisted that in their teaching the question of future probation was only a minor point. The real significance of Andover Theology, styled by the men themselves "Progressive Orthodoxy," was that Andover Seminary was turning her face toward new light, and seeking to reconstruct the doctrines handed down from the New England fathers so as to meet the conditions of present-day life and thought. It is plain enough in the retrospect how futile was the attempt made to suppress the teachings of the Andover men, although the attack was sufficient to well-nigh cause the ruin of Andover Seminary. "Progressive Orthodoxy" was in reality but a part of the world-wide movement, which began about that time, toward a more liberal and practical conception of Christian truth. "Strange that men think they can stay the current of thought," as one of the prophets of that day exclaimed. "As well think to press the light of noon back into the sun, and sink the sun behind the eastern hills."

## THE “TESTING” OF THE COLLEGE

The specific attack upon Andover Theology, and particularly upon the hypothesis of Future Probation, was made on behalf of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, that great missionary organization of the Congregational churches of this country. The Prudential Committee, or governing body of the American Board, a majority of whom were strongly conservative men, supported by the conservative element in the denomination at large, assumed the function of guardians of the faith, against the dangerous heresy of Future Probation. There was seen impending in the new theory “a Niagara plunge into universalism.” This hope of future probation would “cut the nerve of missions”—for why bring to the heathen the alternative of accepting Christ, with its fearful risk for eternity, when they might better be left in their ignorance to the mercy of God? Accordingly the Prudential Committee instituted a policy of strict examination of candidates for appointment as foreign missionaries upon their views as to Future Probation, declining to commission any who showed the least trace of infection. The policy was of course aimed chiefly at the graduates of Andover Seminary. Among the Andover graduates who were cast aside under this inquisition the most conspicuous case was that of the Rev. Robert A. Hume, missionary to India, at that time home on furlough. He was a man of splendid ability, and consecration, and missionary enthusiasm, whose work in India had been eminently successful; but the Prudential Committee declined to reappoint

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

him on account of his views regarding Future Probation.

This famous case, together with others of like nature, fanned the controversy to white heat. It became the all-absorbing topic in the religious press of the country, the two leading periodicals of the Congregational denomination vigorously supporting the Prudential Committee. The newspapers of the country took up the subject, and public attention everywhere was drawn to this exciting struggle, which now threatened to result in a schism of the Church.

The "Gettysburg of the fight" was at the meeting of the American Board held at Des Moines, Iowa, October 7, 1886. It was at that time that Dr. Ward and Yankton College became involved in the dispute in a manner which made it the crisis of his career. The question was upon whether the American Board should sustain its Prudential Committee in the policy it had adopted in relation to Andover Seminary and Future Probation. Dr. Ward, as a corporate member of the Board, attended that meeting, and in the famous "Great Debate" which there occurred spoke and voted for the cause of Andover. He stood with the Andover men, not because he was himself an Andover graduate, not because Professor Smyth and other Andover teachers were his personal friends, and distinctly not because of any particular interest he had in the question of Future Probation. As one has rightly said of him, "he was not a theologian, but a man of action." What he did believe in profoundly was the Christian man-

## THE "TESTING" OF THE COLLEGE

hood of a missionary like Hume, and of those splendid, inspiring, and consecrated teachers in Andover Seminary. Dr. Ward was one of those who were not afraid to trust the consciousness of Christian men. "The real question at issue," he said in a letter to his sister, "is liberty of thought."

So he took his stand in the great battle on the side of liberty of thought. It was the side that was bound to win in the end, but on that day it was the losing side, as everyone could foresee, for the Conservatives were largely in the majority. That Dr. Ward chose the course he did, in that hour of intense factional strife, when the principalities and powers of the Denomination were arrayed on the other side, could not but mean grave peril to the struggling college of which he was the head. He certainly realized the danger he incurred. The occasion was a proper one for the display of that form of discretion known as "institutional cowardice," but Dr. Ward was the wrong man for it. It is known that after he had made his speech at the Board meeting, one of the powerful New England leaders of the conservative side came to him, and with an almost threatening gesture said: "*We will make your college pay for this when you come East to collect funds.*" The College was dearer than life itself to Dr. Ward, yet his reply was: "*College or no college, I will say what I believe to be right and just and true.*"

There was power in the situation that could make the threat good, so strong was the determination of conservative leaders to stamp out

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

heresy at any cost. But the peril which now confronted him was soon greatly heightened by events which occurred at Yankton in the wake of the Des Moines controversy. Word was carried home, by one who was a spectator there and heard Dr. Ward's speech, that the President of the College had turned Universalist, and had committed the institution to the doctrine of Future Probation. The announcement was followed up by a determined attack, which stirred the whole town, and divided the church into bitter factions. Certain members of the Board of Trustees of the College were induced to resign, and to publish in the leading denominational paper in the East a statement declaring their fears that the Institution was now given over to the Andover heresy, and their belief that the policy of the President was "*fatal alike to the financial and spiritual interests of the College.*"

This personal attack in his own town and church and Board of Trustees struck home to Dr. Ward's heart. Men who had been his friends since early days, who had worked with him in the upbuilding of Church and College, were turned against him in bitter opposition. Those who knew him closely could never forget how he suffered under it. It was all such a mistaken and misguided piece of persecution! Dr. Ward had not, by his action at Des Moines, or by any other act or purpose, "committed the College to the Andover doctrine." Moreover, in the work of the College there had never been any attempt to teach a theology, or exercise any sort of sectarian influ-

## THE “TESTING” OF THE COLLEGE

ence over students. No one was more astonished at the accusation brought against Dr. Ward than the students themselves. Many of them had never heard of such a thing as Future Probation. In all probability the doctrine had never been mentioned nor alluded to within the college walls by student, professor, or president. Yet the word of condemnation had now gone forth from Dr. Ward’s own home, and from the council chamber of the College itself, to strengthen the hands of those who had already assumed an attitude of hostility to him. The great organ of the denomination, published in Boston, to which the statement of the four resigning trustees had been sent, called attention to the affair as a warning sign of the way things were going. “The Andover discussion has reached what might be called the extreme interior, and has shown its divisive energy in the disruption of the Board of Trustees of Yankton College.” And after presenting the purport of the communication by the trustees, the editorial concluded with the following comment—indicating the inevitable bearing of this whole course of events: *“Benevolent Congregationalists who may be solicited about this time to aid Yankton College will do well to look at the subject in the light of these facts.”*

The opponents of Dr. Ward were now armed with the means to crush the College, and he had now to gird himself for a fight in which the odds were terribly against him. And with it all he had to bear the wound in his heart of desertion and hostility at home.

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

He spent four months of the ensuing winter and spring traveling in New England, doing his utmost to repair the damage that had been done. It is known that many pulpits were now closed to this "*dangerous person, so false to the church and the gospel he was supposed to preach,*" and that individuals were warned not to give him any financial assistance as he went to and fro soliciting funds. The Congregational College and Education Society, also, which had given its fostering aid to the Institution hitherto, was now "scared and cold," fearing for its own safety because of its relationship with the suspected institution.

In some quarters Dr. Ward was received with loyal encouragement and support, and in his own accounts of those days, with characteristic hopefulness, he makes the most of every bright sign. Especially by his friends at Andover he was hailed with enthusiasm and given every possible assistance. Writing from Andover in February to Professor Shaw he says: "I have had what might be called an ovation, and all on account of my so-called heresy. Have seen Churchill, Tucker, and Professor Smyth, and have just come from dining at Professor Smyth's. Oh, it is good to be counted worthy to suffer with such men, and reverently be it said, all this makes one feel more in sympathy with Christ. . . . I have been busy nearly all the time removing fears and prejudices caused by the publication of that resignation in 'The Congregationalist.' I have not failed in a single instance. The most signal victory was

## THE "TESTING" OF THE COLLEGE

at Fitchburg two days since in getting an old man who had given a \$1,000 scholarship to withdraw his withdrawal. It will end I think in getting more from him."

His letters to Mrs. Ward, especially in the earlier part of this trip, give every possible item of good cheer. The following bright letter tells of inspiration received from that most intimate of his eastern friends, Dr. C. F. P. Bancroft, Principal of Phillips Academy, Andover.

"Salem, Mass., Feb. 24, 1887.

"What a blessed thing it is to have the power of bringing cheer to others. It is worth far more than money. I have had a bit of it to-day, I mean from another, which will always be remembered. I went into Boston early this morning; trudged, tramped, and interviewed; got \$100 from one man, a promise from another, and an appointment from another. Then went to select books at Bartlett's. There found Edward Taylor, who had a good word. Looking out of the window, whom should I see but Bancroft. I ran after him, and soon we were hidden in a dark corner full of musty books, talking College. It was nothing in particular he *said*, but the *cheer*, the faith, the more than solar light in his face and eyes which built me a firm foundation on which to stand, and made my heart *sing*."

News of Bancroft and the Andover circle of friends was always pleasant to Mrs. Ward. She and the children had spent some months at Andover during a previous winter while Dr. Ward

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

was at his work in the East, forming close family friendships in those Andover homes; and the Ward and Bancroft families had spent a summer vacation together at Martha's Vineyard in adjacent cottages near East Chop Light. Dr. Ward's letters from Andover at this time are full of the warm regard which all those friends felt for her. "When one of your letters comes to this Hill," he writes, "it is passed around from house to house like a new novel."

From some of the most active and prominent Andover sympathizers, as well as from the Andover men themselves, Dr. Ward received conspicuous support; which very fact, however, may have strengthened opposition to him in other quarters. One strong backer was Dr. Newman Smyth, of New Haven, brother of Professor Egbert Smyth of Andover Seminary, one of the ablest and most influential men of the newer faith. On October 18, 1886, shortly following the meeting at Des Moines, Dr. Smyth had preached a sermon at New Haven on the subject of that meeting, which was published in full in one of the Boston papers. The passage from that sermon quoted below is an allusion to Dr. Ward, and the stand he had there taken. "One beneficent result of such a meeting and trial of faith as we have just passed through is to develop and consolidate as a working power the whole body of educated men whose influence ten or twenty years from now will be profoundly felt in the missionary history and triumph of American Christianity; men who have faith enough in God's revelation of him-

## THE “TESTING” OF THE COLLEGE

self in Christ to be eager to bring their beliefs out into all possible light; men who read and think and trust; men who belong to no faction or party in the church; men who are tolerant because they have won their faith through strivings and at the cost of many traditions; men who, whatever faults may mar their work, are not going to prove theological deifiers; men who are not ambitious for the honors of leadership, and not afraid to suffer if need be for their convictions, *and if ever a Western college president should come to you with my endorsement on his paper as a Christian man who at a time of trial knew not what institutional cowardice was, I trust you will honor the draft.*”

Of his visit to Dr. Smyth’s church, which was in April, he says in his letter to Mrs. Ward: “I was quite surprised when Smyth told me this morning that I was to be the first one who had entered his pulpit for such a purpose, and then gave a history of the dislike of the Church to hear such things, and of their peculiarities. But I felt that I was here on God’s errand, and so was neither afraid nor dismayed. They listened well. I made the whole as strong as possible, for I felt that I was pleading not only for one college but for all colleges at the West. Smyth gave me a good introduction, alluding to what he had said of me after getting back from Des Moines, and after I was through followed with a few well-chosen words. . . . In less than an hour after the close of the service came a note from a gentleman of wealth and a professor in the Scientific School, saying, ‘I have never heard the argument

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

in favor of the western college presented so strongly as by Dr. Ward, and I am obliged to you for letting us hear him.' There was a check for \$100 in the letter. . . . The sentence I have quoted is worth more to me than the check, for it shows that my chief desire and prayer was granted, that I might do my work so as to honor God and help forward the cause of Christian education at the West."

Yet in spite of the characteristic hopefulness expressed in his letters, the cloud of trouble that hung over him was growing darker. Notwithstanding the exceptional support given him in some quarters, and the extraordinary and prolonged solicitation of that year, the contributions he secured, never at best sufficient, fell off by a large per cent, as the records of the year show. The influence of hostile faction was steadily counting against him. What he was so unwilling to see was forced upon his mind as the weeks went on, and now and then is sadly revealed in his letters. "It is growing very mysterious, very dark, I may say," he writes to Professor Shaw. "I am everywhere received with the utmost kindness, and often extreme pains taken to show how highly we are esteemed. I do not think we have lost a single friend; I know we have gained many new ones. But as yet the money does not come even so fast as our present rate of going calls for."

It was early in that year of 1887 that Dr. Ward became aware that he was a victim of that fatal malady, diabetes, which was destined within

## THE “TESTING” OF THE COLLEGE

three years to carry him to his grave. What he needed was rest, and relief from his burden of anxiety, by which his life could probably have been considerably prolonged. But he must keep up the fight. He never worked harder nor more unremittingly than in these remaining years. The seriousness of his condition was known to but few, but in his letters to Mrs. Ward from this time on there is the frequent note of great physical weariness, and sometimes even of mental depression; and in both their minds there dwells now that foreshadowing thought of “dying without the sight.”

I cannot forbear quoting somewhat at length from the following beautiful letter:

“Wellesley College, March 5, 1887.”

He is speaking of a growing feeling of depression for the past week, “such as I have never had before—at least in so marked a manner. It came on me as if from without—as something with which I had nothing to do, as if thrown at me, and not to be avoided or escaped. It increased, until this morning I was about ready to give up. I did not see how I could carry the work farther, and it seemed as if the only sensible thing was to give the work into other hands.

“Then I prayed, the only thing I could do, and told Christ I was utterly discouraged. I don’t think my *faith* failed me one atom; certainly not my faith that by some hand the College would be built. That was about all my prayer. There was no wonderful reply, no promise of Scripture

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

brought to mind, no assurance that in some way the College is to succeed which I have not had from the first.

"But my depression is gone. All day I have been full of more than usual confidence and quiet. And so my burden is taken away, and in the way you have so often suggested—by getting near to Christ. More and more this comes to me as the solution of every difficulty; as the key to every situation; as the only means of 'overcoming,' of 'enduring to the end.'

"I have not yet met Miss Freeman.\* She is at Norumbega Hall, one of the new buildings, with Professor Palmer, of Cambridge, who is to read here this evening from the *Odyssey*. . . . Just here he came in, for this is the room for all gentlemen guests. He did not know me at first but soon recalled me, and we chatted very pleasantly until it was time for the reading. . . . There were a hundred girls or more to hear him read from the 22nd and 23rd Books. The first tells how Ulysses and Telemachus, helped by the swineherd and the neatherd, slew the suitors who had been seeking the hand of Penelope. The 23rd is taken up with the meeting between Ulysses and Penelope after the suitors have all been slain. I was able to follow the text much better than I supposed would be possible—for, as Professor Palmer said after the reading, 'it is only we idlers who can keep up our Greek. Men who do things like you cannot find time for it.'

\*Miss Alice Freeman, president of Wellesley College, afterward wife of Professor George H. Palmer, of Harvard University.

## THE “TESTING” OF THE COLLEGE

“It was strange that just as my heart was aching with absence from you, should come this story of Ulysses, wandering at the divine command, absent from his home and his native land for twenty years, at last returning to find his son alive, and his wife faithful, and all his enemies slain, and to get his home and wife again. I must not wait twenty years, nor twenty weeks, wherein I am happier than Ulysses, and then come to my wife, truer than Penelope, and wiser, and more loving, when not Homer himself could tell how we shall be filled with joy, and I shall be crowned with greater honor than the long-suffering Ulysses.”

I refrain from committing to these pages many beautiful passages from his letters to her, but give a few extracts which will suggest the way in which they were working together in those days of trial. Speaking of what she had to bear in his absence, what he calls the “scornings and “scourgings” of factional hostility at home, he says: “It is all too hard to think of. . . . No man ever left so great interests in the hands of his wife. No one was ever so well represented; no one will ever so royally stand, and with such loving dignity, as you are now standing for me. . . . But I am praying for you that your faith fail not, just as you, and Jennie, and Father Nichols are praying for me. Sometime a reward will come to me, to the College, to you, for all this burden bearing. Is it wrong to tell our Father that which he already knows, that we are pressed out of measure, and that we must have deliver-

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

ance, and very soon."—"Tramped down to see \_\_\_\_\_, and I do not know whether I gained anything more than to have him redeem his pledge of \$500. . . . Bancroft is not much encouraged. I am. But here is another place where we have done all we can, and there is nothing left but to pray God to move his heart. I am just learning that I have much to learn about prayer."—They have a list of persons that they are praying God to move—he and she and "Jennie and Father Nichols" and one or two others all praying together. Their praying together was not only specific as to persons, but preconcerted with reference to dates and hours. "I want you to pray very hard that R—— B—— may be ready for my meeting him, *which now I think will be on the morning of the 10th.*"— He is about to have an interview with M——. "What will come of it? Just what our Father wills. More and more the whole of my work is a matter of prayer, so as to find out God's will. I am reading over and over again, and have done so for days, the prayer of Christ in the Gospel of St. John. There is so much in it: it covers more than I ever get in all my life. If you were here we would consult and pray over it—and you are here in effect, by your loving inspiration filling my life. I give thanks for every one of these nineteen years which have bound us closer and closer together. I have not yet come to know all the blessedness of our union."

Dr. Ward, in his dire distress, was relying much on a kind of spiritual logic, as expressed in the

## THE "TESTING" OF THE COLLEGE

following from one of the letters of the period. He is not getting money enough to make possible the carrying forward of work at the College which advancing classes require. Next year students will be leaving, and others not coming, because they cannot get the work they want. He is driven then to this dilemma: "First, Yankton College never had a right to be; it was none of God's planting, and consequently will die in ignominy; or, Second, deliverance in the shape of money is coming, not in large quantity but enough, and coming in time to save needless loss of momentum already gained. I cannot accept number one, nor can anybody else, not even the worst enemy Yankton College ever had. Therefore number two stands demonstrated."

Professor Shaw, indeed, was at this very time questioning whether, owing to the prospect of retrenchment in the teaching force for next year, he was not in duty bound to advise certain of the advanced students to go elsewhere for the completion of their course. Dr. Ward replied that in the first place he thinks "the advice premature, for it remains to be seen what the teaching force is to be. It would do no harm at least for them to wait until Commencement." In his own mind Dr. Ward was relying on that reasoning quoted above by which "deliverance in the shape of money" was coming. But he urges also a further argument, no less characteristic of him. "Second, and for stronger reasons, I should strive to have them see that they get more than an equivalent for lost studies by becoming a part of our Col-

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

lege in its formative state. I am given to prophecy at times as you know, but it needs no prophetic power to say that Pound, if he keeps faith with us to the end, will be a greater man than if he had taken his Junior and Senior years in an eastern college. And you and I will never see any better character-building in Yankton College than is doing and will be done before our endowment and buildings come. I wish my boys were ready to take the course now, rather than after our prosperity comes. I know that these words are but idle tales to boys and girls that have not the faith to hear them. But I should labor harder than for endowment to make them see that it is an opportunity that comes to but few."

It was at the close of that year of disaster following the affair at Des Moines, at Commencement in June, 1887, that there occurred the graduation of the first class from Yankton College. The class consisted of one member, Edward Hinman Pound. ("We weigh, not count," was Dr. Ward's pun on the circumstance.) Pound was a young man of high character and ability, who studied for the ministry, took up his work on a home missionary field, but died within a few years. The scene of that first graduation made a deep impression upon those who were present. The situation of the College was known to be precarious. To the minds of some, reckoning from the darker signs of that year of "fatal policies" and falling-off of gifts, that first class seemed likely to be the last, or one of the last, that would ever graduate from

## THE “TESTING” OF THE COLLEGE

Yankton College. But to Dr. Ward it was an hour of exultant faith. Those who saw and heard him then have never forgotten his look and words, when, in conferring the degree of Bachelor of Arts on that single graduate of the class of 1887, he hailed him as “*the first man in a thousand years.*”



CHAPTER XI  
PUTTING LIFE INTO IT



## CHAPTER XI

### PUTTING LIFE INTO IT

**A**FTER that year of crisis, 1887, the general attitude toward the College, as developed on account of the Andover Controversy, became gradually more favorable. In the crucial point of missionary policy conservative leaders found it necessary to yield ground, and the tide was turning everywhere in the direction of more liberal views. Dr. Ward, in his journeyings to and fro in New England, was quick to feel the change coming all along the line. "The wind sits in a different quarter from two years ago," he writes, confidently. . . . "The doors are all open to us now." His hopeful mind kindled with enthusiasm, not only in the assurance that the College would recover from the blow which had been struck, but in a new vision for the future and greatly enlarged plans for the Institution. An other encouraging feature of the time was that the long-deferred admission of North and South Dakota into the Union was now at hand, Congress having passed the enabling act in February, 1888. In an article published in "The Advance," Dr. Ward proclaimed that event with a ringing appeal to the churches to rise to a splendid opportunity. "Dakota's hour at last has struck." Political emancipation is gained; immigration is

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

coming; all lines of business will be quickened. For the "Christian patriot" the great opportunity in Dakota is now wide open. "He sees more schools, more churches, more Christian homes. He sees the elements of power all waiting for him to use in making Dakota a mighty Christian commonwealth."

But the change in general attitude toward the College was only gradual, and the recovery of the Institution from the disaster of 1887 was in reality painful and slow. "This year," Dr. Ward said, in writing of the condition of the College early in 1888, "is like that of a sick patient creeping back into strength again." If he could have been spared a few more years of life, he might have won substantial and complete vindication for the College; but his health was failing and the time was short, and it was achievement enough that he held things together up to the point where the College *must be carried forward* by others after he was gone.

Some impression of the desperate straits of the Institution in 1888, and of the loyalty and friendship of that member of the faculty who carried so large a share of burden and responsibility at home, may be had from the following letter to Professor Shaw:

"Salem, Feb. 12, 1888.

"I carried your letter of February 2 to Providence and back last week in the vain hope of finding time to reply. I cannot now, nor ever, reply as I wish I could—for such a letter takes a segment of your life to produce, and a goodly part

## PUTTING LIFE INTO IT

must come out of my life to respond. No letter has ever come to us that we value so highly since this college life began to bind us together. . . . We were so comforted by it, so drawn to you and your wife, so humbly thankful that God has given us hearts so true, so willing to endure hardness for his sake, in the same cause where we are putting in our lives, that we have been very confident ever since getting it, that more than ever *God means to build Yankton College.*

"Yes, we are bitten with the same unbusiness-like 'madness,' 'folly,' 'nonsense,' and even worse names. They have been flung at us for years. We have been urged to keep out, to get out, to drop the whole thing, etc., and especially rebuked for putting our property in peril for such a venture. 'You have no right to do it, your children must be considered,'—this has been the strongest argument. . . . Yes, we have gone through it all, and far more than I hope you and Mrs. Shaw will ever be called upon to endure—more than there will be need for you or any one to experience. For I think it was a loving Providence that honored us with the choice of standing at the front. The little patrimony of Mrs. Ward was in such shape that it could be put in the breach from time to time as needed. So far it has been sufficient to secure needed financial results. It is now all involved in Yankton College.\* There is not a dollar more that we can mortgage. My

\*The Ward house was at that time mortgaged for \$7,500 to secure the debts of the College. Afterwards, by action of the Trustees, that security was transferred to the college grounds and buildings.

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

life insurance policies are stuffed into the same hole. There is no need to tell of the close quarters into which we are driven by this way of using our funds. We have not really 'suffered.' We are 'in debt,' however, and that means suffering enough. Ultimately, however, we know that nobody will lose a cent by us and so there is that much mitigation of our torture.

"Now where is all this going to end? We cannot do any more in the line of giving or pledging. Nor do I think there is any need for us or for anyone to do it. And again, I do not think we were presumptuous in taking the position we did, viz., we will put in ourselves and all we have, until in other ways God carries on the work. I think so much was needed from someone, *for an institution that is to live, must have life, as you say, literally life, put into it.* . . . The money, even with all the pinching involved to us, is the very least we have done. It is not worthy to be mentioned except as being in the line of the same stress that has come to you. And yet the financial strain is the way by which we are properly tested as to consecration, and sacrifice, and power to overcome.

"How is it to end? If there was ever any reason for Yankton College to be, there is only one way for it to end—in complete success. . . . I do not look for a deliverance that is going to absolve us from hard work, from bearing burdens, from waiting for what seems to us a long time for results that are even vital. But the College will never go one step backward in its efficiency as a power for good in all that region—

## PUTTING LIFE INTO IT

unless we deliberately by cowardice push it back. . . . I have no atom of anxiety for the future as to money. Have you as to 'life' power? Cannot you and I (I will not include any others now) go on as we have done?

"Why, the bitterness is past! That came last year, when those who were not of us left us. We lost strength; we poured out some good blood with the bad, which has made this year like that of a weakened patient, creeping back into strength again. We have already given *life*, even more costly than the stopping of physical life: for many a time it would have been a blessed relief to die, and I pray to be forgiven for the occasional cowardice of wishing for death. . . . ."

A little later in the spring of that year, like a ray of light out of the darkest cloud, came a strong financial uplift from the home town. Yankton people had always given liberally according to their means in support of the College. It was the women of the town now who came to the front in the interests of the long deferred erection of Ladies' Hall. They held a magnificent bazaar. Hundreds of busy hands worked for it, contributions were secured from friends far and near, everybody patronized it, and the affair was a success unparalleled in the history of the town. The proceeds were about five thousand dollars, and the building of Ladies' Hall was immediately started.

It is remembered how Dr. Ward "visibly rallied under it." Although no other reinforcement

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

came, and the debts of the College went on piling up, the encouragement of that event probably confirmed his mind the more in that vision of larger things which possessed him during these last two years. One project which largely engaged his mind from now to the end of his life was the establishing of a theological training school in connection with the College. The idea may have been in some degree an outgrowth of the Andover upheaval, although Dr. Ward certainly had no thought of propagating this or that disputed theological theory. He conceived a teaching of theology that should be practical and broad and in sympathy with liberal tendencies of thought. But his motive above all was to supply training to western young men of consecrated purpose, in an institution on western ground and identified with the spirit of the frontier, in order to meet the demand for ministers in home missionary churches springing up everywhere in the new state. Some particulars of the plan may be seen from the following passage from a letter of January, 1889, to Dr. Newman Smyth, of New Haven, of whom he is inquiring for a man to take the headship of the new department.

"We already have more than twenty men who are ready to come and study for a few weeks or a few months each, and then go out and work in churches and Sunday schools, returning later for more study. In this way the ground can be taken and held for vital Christian activities. Our present faculty of five good men are willing and able to do much of the work of teaching. But we

## PUTTING LIFE INTO IT

need one man to supervise the whole work. He must be a scholar, and yet patient with those who are not students, yet who are trying to learn. He must have faith in God and man, must be full of inspiration for those who come to him. These men are shrewd level-headed, warm-hearted men, whose lives God has touched, and who are full of zeal which needs to be directed."

Dr. Joseph T. Duryea, of Boston, one of the leading New England ministers, who became a warm friend and admirer of Dr. Ward in these later years, and who heartily believed in the plan, was besought to take the headship of the theological school; but decided instead to accept a call to the First Congregational Church of Omaha, where he would lend his influence to the enterprise, and in a few years would come if needed and give himself to the work. Another friend of Dr. Ward's, Professor W. J. Tucker, of Andover, gave enthusiastic approval of the plan, and various other strong men East and West gave their encouragement to the project. Dr. Ward, seconded by others, strongly urged the plan in the denominational papers, and in conferences and assemblies of the Church. He did not fail to solicit and secure the endorsement of the various societies of the denomination. Before the opening of the fall term in 1889, the plan seems to have been fully settled upon, and arrangements made for the starting of classes at that time. Yet, after all, nothing was actually done, and with the death of Dr. Ward the plan fell to the ground.

Another enterprise of Dr. Ward's, of kindred

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

nature with this, was, however, successfully launched about this time. This was what was known as the Summer Theological Institute, closely connected with the College, the purpose of which was to afford special opportunity for instruction in theological, religious, and ethical subjects to ministers and others of the region tributary to Yankton. The Institute began shortly after Commencement and continued for about two weeks. Its work consisted of lectures by a group of prominent clergymen and scholars from the East. Two of these Institutes were held before Dr. Ward's death, in the summers of 1888 and 1889, and a third was held afterward, in the summer of 1890.

Dr. Ward showed magnanimity and statesmanlike judgment in the way he conceived and carried out this plan, at that time of theological controversy, when he himself and the College were under fire of criticism. He invited to the platform of his Summer Institute both liberals and conservatives, the majority if anything being of the latter type. The list of lecturers included, along with liberals like Dr. Duryea of Boston and Dr. Meredith of Brooklyn, such prominent conservatives as President Fairchild, Professor G. F. Wright and Dr. James Brand, of Oberlin, Dr. A. H. Quint, of Boston, and Dr. Goodwin, of Chicago. These Institutes were carried out with success and entire good feeling, and doubtless did much to overcome the prejudice which had been formed against Dr. Ward and the College.

Another project, in line with that vision of larger things which illumined his mind now, when the immediate condition was darker than ever, was that of working particularly for large endowment. He adopts a distinctly new plan of soliciting and praying for large sums. He has always finely appreciated the generosity of givers of moderate means. Again and again he tells of the accompanying word of encouragement as meaning more to him than the check. "But now we have come to the point," he writes to Professor Shaw, "when we must pray for large things, and specific things, and expect them." Then he drives home his argument by that spiritual logic of his—"The success of the past which God has given us opens the way for them, and makes them a necessity. So I have had in hand for some time a list of names."—Then follows the list, as given at the same time in letters to Mrs. Ward.—"Now I want you and Mrs. Shaw to join Mrs. Ward and me in praying especially for the \$300,000. There is just as much warrant in doing this as anything. It is as easy for God to bring this to us as to bring the driblets that come now, and a great deal more reasonable to expect. Mr. and Mrs. Sheldon are with us in this, and I have written to Mr. Bradley to the same effect. . . . Now let us be brave in our pleadings with God. This is no time for timidity. We must ask for large things. And yet before the great things come we shall be hemmed in by the Red Sea and the Egyptians even tighter than we are now. 'But he that overcometh shall inherit all things,

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

and I will be his God and he shall be my son.'"

His letters to Mrs. Ward are full of these plans for larger things, and radiant with hope and prayer. "Deliverance is near. In God's counsels it has come." Sitting in his room at the Sheldon's in Salem, he writes: "I wish you could see my picture gallery; all my family looking at me, and every one full of loving cheer. I am *sure* your spirit looks at me as I am writing, and especially of late, since we have said so much of coming to God in prayer. There, as I looked up just now I caught it—the look of love and victory."

But victory must come quickly if his eyes are to see it. He is evidently withholding somewhat of the facts from Mrs. Ward, yet there are sufficient indications in the letters that his strength is failing. He is working as never before, as if driven by the presentiment that his time is short. He was a man who naturally found time for a multitude of interests without showing the pressure of haste; but now there are days when he feels the whirl and rush of work. He has "done one day's work before dark and another day's work since," attacking a great pile of correspondence, while his back "aches like a stone-bruise." He is beset by an ever-recurrent "tiredness." Walking, and going upstairs, are full of dreaded pain, and to be avoided when possible. He sleeps and rests on trains; speaking exhausts him, as also important interviews, "whether he gets the money or not."

Sometimes a deeper note is struck, as in these sentences: "The way grows darker, the burden heavier, the deliverance farther away, but at the same time I am kept in perfect peace. I know the dawning will come, the victory will be complete, but I may never see it with these mortal eyes. What matter! The kingdom of God will suffer no loss, and that is enough. Last night my Bible reading was of Christ stilling the sea. His surprised inquiry when the disciples awakened him, 'Where is your faith?' is yours and mine to hear these times. . . . But better than deliverance is faith in Christ—so 'where is your faith' must be my theme. I will get me ready for the night, and lie down in peace and sleep, for Thou makest me to dwell in safety...." He often speaks of the raw, damp, New England weather, and longs for the brightness of Dakota sunshine. In one letter he adds: "But I must not complain. It is God's rain and cloud, and He knows how and when to send them, and they are doing His bidding. May I do as well."

Near the close of 1888, his friend Bancroft proposed to Dr. Ward that he join him in a trip abroad for the winter. Dr. Bancroft was to sail December 29. Mrs. Ward and other near friends who knew the condition of his health did their utmost to persuade him to go. "I should not dare to work if I felt as 'tired' as he evidently does," Dr. Bancroft writes to Mrs. Ward, as he and she are conspiring together to bring the event to pass.

A circumstance which seemed to make the proj-

ect more feasible was that just at this time Dr. Ward was in near prospect of securing a large loan of \$20,000 for the College, which he had been working for recently. A characteristic circumstance indicated in his letters is that Dr. Ward probably did not *pray* for the loan. It appears to have been outside of his program with God. His prayers were for gifts, and specifically for large ones, and those prayers were answered, although not until after he was gone. Yet this loan, which he sought and eventually secured, was a very practical saving stroke for the Institution, relieving its distresses for the time being, and enabling it to keep on with its work until something better could be done.

One week before the Bancrofts were to sail the success of the loan became strongly probable. "Telling Bancroft of this, he and Mrs. Bancroft fairly besieged me to go with him." The temptation was very strong. He exclaims at the prospect of "England, Italy, Egypt, Palestine, and with Bancroft of all men! But it is not to be *done*, only thought of." The idea of indulgence for himself which Mrs. Ward could not share was hard to accept; he was heavily in debt and could not afford it, and "it would not be honest to use money in travel" which he really owed to creditors; he tries to argue that his health is better than it was a year ago. And then the work! He must not stop. He is eager and exultant in pursuit of his vision of larger things. And after all he does not wish to go to Europe at this time "because I am just getting into the spirit of my

work; I am coming to the proper understanding of how to begin. And our College is soon to be in the throes of birth, and growth, and power, in ever so many new lines. And I want to be 'in it,' and so far as I am able, 'of it.' This new life will carry me along with it, so that I do not need Europe."

At the last moment Mrs. Ward sent him a telegram bearing the one word "Go!" but to no avail.

His letters of these days, as he turns his face to the work again, are filled with joy. He was with the Clarks at Salem for the Christmas season. "Just back from the Christmas service," he writes from there. "De's sermon, taking the Magnificat of Mary for his text, was *very* fine. What a contrast to the keeping of the day even a few years ago. I was taught *not* to keep Christmas, and as for gifts on that day they were not so much as thought of. . . . The glory of the sunshine makes the day a magnificat. It is just coming round the corner to look into this room. I fling up the curtains to take all that will come." A few days later he is writing, "I get tired, very tired, but rest quickly. Yes, I am better, not only better than when I left home, but better than a year ago. . . . I wish you could be here to see the surf at Marblehead to-morrow." And again he writes: "I cannot describe it (the beautiful day), but to have the winter air and the summer sun, the summer sky and winter earth without the snow, has made a rare day. Riding along the Albany road you know we see everywhere hills and rocks and streams. Everything

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

was beautiful. For a moment I caught something of the joy God must feel to have made so many beautiful things. Lord, if this earth can be so fair what will Thy glory be! My joy would have been complete if I could have shared it with you."

That eastern trip of the winter of 1888-9, continuing on toward the first of March, was the last that Dr. Ward was able to make. Never until near the close of that journey had he yielded to the idea of even a pause in his work. But at that time he writes: "Just now I feel that I have used up about all my vitality, and for the sake of the cause must stop for a time and renew my strength. But I hope never to be laid aside as a non-productive factor in the world of work." No large gifts were secured, yet his letters were more than ever appreciative of small ones, and of the kindness which was shown to him on every hand. One of the happiest experiences of that last trip was his reception by Dr. Lyman Abbott, then pastor of Plymouth Church in Brooklyn. It was a very special privilege to be admitted to the pulpit of Plymouth Church on an errand of solicitation, but Dr. Abbott was another of those leaders of the liberal movement in theology who admired Dr. Ward for the stand he had taken at Des Moines, and he wanted to help him. Writing of that occasion Dr. Ward says: "I waited for Dr. Abbott in the vestibule. When he came in he complained that I did not come to his house, and then took me into the chapel. It was full. He said

## PUTTING LIFE INTO IT

he could give me but ten minutes at the end of the meeting, and my heart sank; but I had nothing to say, for to speak at all there was a favor. At twelve minutes to nine he very pleasantly introduced me, and I began—to condense the doings of twenty years into ten minutes—and did it. As I sat down one man jumped up and said, 'Of all men whom I have wanted to see, this Dr. Ward is the man.' Then an old army officer said: 'I wish this meeting was a regiment and I was in command; I'd order them to give Dr. Ward a thousand dollars on the spot, and I would give a tenth.' The first man said, 'I'll give another tenth.' Another said, 'And I another.' Then they waited, and Dr. Abbott said, 'You need not try to do all this now. I am going to give Dr. Ward two weeks and a list of all your names, and he will see you, and you will help him out.' . . . . And so the thing I have wanted has come to pass. I do not expect a great deal of money now, but it will be a beginning. . . . I am tired, ten times as tired to have done this in ten minutes as if I had been given half an hour. It costs to condense like that."

After his return from that trip, the truth was no longer to be avoided that Dr. Ward's life work was very near its end. The trustees of the College took steps for relieving him of any further labor of soliciting funds. Yet during the ensuing summer and fall he kept occupied, part of the time at least, with characteristic activities. He was abroad over the State, more or less as usual, visiting churches, attending mission conferences,

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

and the like; and for a short trip taking the stump in the cause of Constitutional Prohibition and the Constitution, soon to be finally submitted to the people. In August, he and Mrs. Ward were at Lake Henry together, spending a few days of vacation at the home of the Rev. W. B. D. Gray. But even those days seem to have been "busy." He drove from Lake Henry over to Brookings a few miles distant and delivered the Commencement address at the State Agricultural College, which Mr. Gray pronounced at the time to be "the finest thing he ever heard—and more praises of that sort," as Mrs. Ward wrote to a friend. In the same letter Mrs. Ward tells of a drive over the country which she had with her husband, apparently from attending some church meeting in a neighboring town. It appears that neither of them are spending the days in idleness. "The drive home was most delightful for me. The country is so beautiful all around here, and then I had my husband *for an hour all to myself*, which is something to say these busy days, when we both are driven from morning till late at night." She is expecting to go to the annual meeting of the State Association of Congregational Churches at Mitchell, and to make addresses in several towns along the way—perhaps in order to spare Dr. Ward somewhat from such duties.

While at Lake Henry Dr. Ward wrote a birthday letter to his sister Sarah, which reveals something of his thought of approaching death, and of changes in the ways of religious work which

## PUTTING LIFE INTO IT

he believed to be coming. "I have been thinking lately very much about death," he writes, "which is growing to be a most desirable event: not for the sake of escaping work, for I never wanted to do things as much as now, but for the sake of doing better work and in a better manner than now. And then it is not to be an abrupt and painful change—not half so much of an interruption to all our plans and friendships as was your removal from Salem to Topeka. If I did not get a great deal of comfort out of the thought I should not introduce it into a birthday letter. I anticipate so much from the reunion of friends and the relief from the *burden* of the flesh that it is really the fittest of all times for such a letter.

"This old earth needs so much done for it yet that it will take more than one of the 'ages' for the saints to busy themselves upon it, before 'the end comes' and 'all things are delivered over to the Father.' It will be a blessed time when we can work directly with and for Christ and not under some 'Society.'"

And he goes on to express his belief that "vital changes" were coming, "equivalent to a revolution," in the methods of the work of the Church, whereby the churches themselves would assume a more direct relation to the missions and benevolences carried on in their name. Dr. Ward had for many years been strongly critical of the existing policies of church work under the different societies. On this subject he had the spirit of a reformer, and doubtless a reformer's impatience. It is testimony to his consecrated sincerity that

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

the officers of the societies loved him always, regarded him as a tower of strength in the whole cause of missions, and mourned his loss profoundly. It is testimony also to his wisdom that the reforms which he advocated and prophesied were, in a measure at least, brought to pass, as evidenced in an important action taken by the National Council of Congregational Churches in 1892. "After a decade of controversy sometimes acrimonious concerning the conduct of the executive of the 'American Board,' a committee appointed three years before reported the existence of a wide-spread desire that the societies which were the agents of the churches in the administration of their common charities should become more directly representative of the churches in their constitution." That action was in the nature of a "vital change" such as Dr. Ward prophesied.

That fall, from the resuming of the work of the College in September, Dr. Ward was not able to take much active part in the affairs of the Institution. He attended faculty meetings more or less, and advised and counselled with trustees regarding the work of the College and plans for the future. Now and then on a pleasant day he would put in an appearance at the College, but after a short visit and looking around a little would walk back home again.

On the 10th of November Dr. Ward preached at Sioux Falls, and was entertained there as often before at the home of the Phillips family, oldtime friends of his and of the College. His

letter written from there to Mrs. Ward, one of the last of his letters which have been preserved, was as follows:

"Sioux Falls, November 9, 1889.

"You know just how I am fixed in this spare chamber where I am so carefully bestowed. Everything is just as it was when we were here last summer. The children, however, have plainly grown since then. I had a merry little time with Rossie and Josie before tea. But what do you think! There is a *baby* in the house, a little baby only nine months old. Mrs. Phillips has taken for her kitchen girl a woman with three children, and this baby is here with the mother. They are all delighted to have it here, and I can imagine the mother feels as if she had fallen among angels. This afternoon Mrs. Phillips and all the children went out riding, asking me to go, but I was too tired and stayed here, working up my sermon, and getting a nap of an hour, so I am much better. I am going to preach to-morrow from 'This is a faithful saying, that Christ came into the world to save sinners, etc.' I am rather longing for an opportunity to preach, and on this subject. I think it will be a good day for me. I will tell you all about it to-morrow when I come up here after dinner.

"Good night, with all my love which I have been too tired to express these many days and nights. I hope Margaret is better and all the children well.

"Sunday P. M. It is just after service; the family have not yet come home. Mrs. Phillips

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

very kindly asked me if I did not want to come home immediately after service, and so after the opening of Sunday school Mr. Voorhees brought me home in the carriage. I am very glad, for I am tired.

“I enjoyed the morning service even more than I expected to. I had ‘freedom,’ as you so often call it. I felt too that the people followed and appreciated the theme. A large number of our friends came to speak to me and inquire for you—the Johnsons, Shermans, Kingsburys and others. ‘Uncle Charlie,’ Mrs. Phillips’ old friend, said: ‘That is a good gospel sermon, and I like to hear such.’ . . . .

“I wish it were right for me to come home to you to-morrow night. I am so restless and unhappy away from *you*. How loving our Father is to let me stay at home this winter, to provide for the College without my going on that long and wearisome quest, and to let me stay at home is a very loving thing.

“Bedtime. The day is over, and I am *so* tired, for I have preached as hard as ever in my life. . . . .”

On Thanksgiving Day, not long after his visit to Sioux Falls, Dr. Ward preached once more, at the union service of the Yankton churches. There were guests at the Ward home that day, as usual on such occasions, and Dr. Ward was able to take part in the festivities and games according to his wont. But death came with unexpected swiftness a fortnight later, December 11, 1889. Dr. Ward was then in the fifty-second year of his age.

The course of that fatal malady which had laid hold on him had undoubtedly been hastened by the great and incessant labors of those last years, and especially by the burden of care and anxiety he had borne. Yet his sudden death was due immediately to blood poisoning, from a carbuncle at the side of his neck, his weakened vitality quickly sinking under the attack. His mind remained clear up to within a few hours of his death. He bade the family good-bye with a special message for each. As the news of his dying condition spread through the town, friends and neighbors in great numbers came to the house, many of whom he was able to see and speak with in farewell. The members of the faculty came, and went in to his bedside one by one. His words with them were full of thought for the future of the College, inspiring them with courage to carry forward the work. No deliverance had yet come to the College, and its prospect seemed now darker than ever; yet Dr. Ward's faith never weakened for a moment. It was God's work; of its ultimate success there could be no doubt. To the Rev. Clinton Douglass, who was then acting as financial agent for the College, Dr. Ward had written but a short time previously: "Remember we are satisfied with what you are doing, and there is no other way to do the work. The harder it is for the present the grander will be the result. Be of good cheer my brother.—Yours in the same bonds." And to the trustees of the College his last message was: "Do not stop anything for me. The work must go on no matter what becomes of the workers."



CHAPTER XII  
CONCLUSION



## CHAPTER XII

### CONCLUSION

**J**OSEPH WARD drew men to him in the strength of a wonderful love. Among those who came to see him at his deathbed was a man who had done him and the College much damage in the Andover matter, one of those Trustees who had resigned. He was a strong man and a leading citizen, at one time mayor of the town. 'Way back in pioneer days he had been converted under Dr. Ward's preaching, had been a deacon in the Church, had served with Dr. Ward on that first Board of Trustees of the Hospital for the Insane, had been associated with Dr. Ward in his educational enterprises from the beginning and had been made a Trustee of the College at the founding. When this old friend, whom he had lost for a time, came to his bedside Dr. Ward was unable to speak, but reaching up his white hand around his neck, drew him down and kissed him.

An incident that is also deeply treasured in connection with Dr. Ward's death was the act of devotion of another oldtime Yankton friend. He was a man of humble life but big of heart, one of those from every rank and station who had

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

known the sympathy and counsel of Dr. Ward in times of trouble and temptation and sorrow. This man, who was a devout Catholic, came to the house the evening after Dr. Ward's death, and having been admitted alone to the chamber where he lay, knelt long beside the body of his friend, praying for his soul in purgatory. He was one of those Catholic fellow townsmen who were wont to speak of him as "Father Ward." This friend was a painter by trade, and had just recently been doing some work on Dr. Ward's house. For this he was unwilling to receive pay, and a few days after the funeral came to Mrs. Ward with a receipted bill for his labor.

So it was that hundreds loved him as a brother and friend: those who had known him as a guest in their homes in the course of his journeyings, people from far and near, rich and poor, who had enjoyed his own wonderful hospitality, those of every sort who had known the uplift of his strong arm in trouble, parents whose wayward boys he had helped to rescue, students whom he had inspired with great ideals, teachers in the College who had shared with him in sacrifice, ministers and missionaries of the frontier whom he had encouraged and strengthened, strong men who had labored at his side in affairs of state, and knew the unselfishness and deep religious spirit of his patriotism—all who in these and countless other ways had come in touch with his genial, sympathetic, inspiring friendship.

In the death of Dr. Ward the town of Yankton and the whole State were moved as never before,



THE WARD HOME IN YANKTON



## CONCLUSION

and in the East and elsewhere, where he had become so widely known, his loss was deeply mourned. On every hand there came notable expressions of appreciation of the greatness of his character and work. In Yankton was held a public memorial meeting, presided over by the mayor of the City, called in order that "All citizens of Yankton" might "show that respect for Dakota's greatest and noblest citizen and one of Yankton's best and truest friends which they all cherish so profoundly in their hearts." The main address of the evening, by Dr. Ward's friend, the Rev. Joseph T. Duryea, D.D., of Omaha, brought home the lesson of his life to the citizenship of the community. Other addresses by prominent Yankton men paid eloquent tribute to his character and public services. Judge Hugh J. Campbell, who had been so closely associated with Dr. Ward in the struggle for statehood, spoke of him as "the greatest man intellectually as well as morally whom the Dakotas have produced," and further as "the most noble, loyal, faithful and royal soul whom I have ever met, whose more than kingly crown was the simple crown of service, to you, to me, to all of us." And again he said, "If South Dakota ever rears in her mansion of statehood any statues in memory of her sons, who have done the state signal service in critical times of danger, and helped most to shape her destinies for good, foremost and highest among them all will stand the noble, genial, powerful form of Joseph Ward."

Public memorial meetings were held likewise

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

in other parts of the state in honor of the man who had wrought his life so richly into the foundation of all that was best in the commonwealth. The monument that marks his grave in the Yankton cemetery was placed there by the contribution of citizens of the town and state. Of the great number of notable expressions of appreciation, in private letters and published notices, at the time of his death and since, a few may be quoted here.

The Rev. Charles M. Sheldon, D.D., of Topeka, Kansas, nephew of Joseph Ward and famous author of "In His Steps," in a letter to Mrs. Ward said: "Uncle was my hero as a boy and my beau ideal as a man. I know that my love for him was a constantly-growing feeling. In more ways than I shall ever be able to express he was inspiration and courage to me. What little personal power and breadth in the ministry I may possess I owe to him unequivocally. I can with pride point to him with my own dear mother, and say, 'they have been my ideals of Christian humanity.'

"When the time comes of writing uncle's life history, I wish to place my humble tribute with the rest. I feel as if his eulogy ought to be written by some one, and I wish that I might have a share in it. Thank God for men like him, who are the best and most unanswerable argument the world can ever have for the reality of spiritual things."

The Rev. A. L. Riggs, D.D., Principal of the Santee Indian Training School, at Santee, Nebraska, in articles published at the time of Dr.

## CONCLUSION

Ward's death, said: "No department of Christian work will feel his loss more than our missions. We have hosts of earnest sympathetic friends, but none with his understanding of the people, and the conditions and needs of the work among them. From his first coming to Dakota he has made himself acquainted with the Indian question, and had a personal interest in it. He would have accepted his appointment under The American Board as Field Secretary of Indian Missions had it not been for the affectionate protests of his church at Yankton. . . . .

"The old prophets were called seers. Joseph Ward was a seer. Many thought his ideas the result of a sanguine temperament and that he was too sanguine at times. But it was not that. He had the spiritual sight into the realities of things, and into the broad thoughts of the Kingdom of God. Thus he took in the interests of a whole state, of our country, of the world."

Dr. Ward, in his strength of "faith" which everyone speaks of with wonder, was like one of Browning's men. The prospect of quick or large success was never the main thing with him, but rather the assurance of a right cause and the pursuit of it with invincible purpose. As one of his old friends used to say, "he could see farther than other men," and he knew how to wait. An incident illustrating his serene disregard for momentary worldly success is recalled in a recent letter to the writer by the Rev. George D. Wilder, of Peking, China, who was a student at Yankton College in Dr. Ward's day. "You remember,"

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

he writes, "the time when I represented the College in the first oratorical contest at Sioux Falls and went through all sorts of distressing experience on the way there, being up all night waiting for trains at Elk Point or somewhere and finally arriving only two or three hours before the contest, all worn out; and then came home with the humiliation of fourth and last place for the dear old College. Well, the most comforting thing I heard was Professor Shaw's report of President Ward's prayer in chapel on the day of the contest. His petition was not specially that we might get first place, but 'that our representative may be pleasing to Thee.' I remember that it was perhaps the first one of many things that revealed to me the real motive of Dr. Ward's life. He did not seek the immediate glaring success for the College or for himself, but he worked for God and the right without any eye to the immediate praise of men or other reward."

The Rev. J. B. Clark, D.D., Secretary of The Congregational Home Missionary Society, in a letter to Mrs. Ward, said: "We feel that our whole work has received a blow.... Will it be a little comfort to you to know how highly we esteemed your husband and how fervently we loved him at this office? As we felt toward him, so do all the churches of the East, and countless friends throughout the country wherever his work is known."

And in a published article the same writer said: "Joseph Ward and Dakota can hardly be named apart. Each belongs to the other. . . .

## CONCLUSION

For Dakota he toiled and prayed and lived and died. His last visit to the rooms of the Home Missionary Society in New York was not fifteen minutes long, but every one of them he spent in pleading for more men and more churches for his beloved Dakota. And Dakota is the monument of Joseph Ward, the pioneer missionary, the Yankton pastor, the college president. Over his Dakota grave might be fitly inscribed the well-known epitaph, '*Si monumentum requiris, circumspice.*' ”

Professor Egbert C. Smyth, of Andover, Massachusetts, in a published article, said: “I cannot refrain from expressing my great and intense admiration for the character of President Ward. It was noble, through and through—large, free, chivalrous, heroic. His devotion to Yankton College was inspiring in its enthusiasm and unselfishness. And how pure it was! He could sacrifice for such an institution everything that worldly men prize, but nothing that saints and heroes love—no good cause, nothing that seemed to him duty, honor, or the dictate of friendship. Yankton College has in his memory an inestimable endowment. It is everything to an educational institution to start under such a leadership, and the College for which he gave himself in unmeasured sacrifice and toil must receive from him an influence and direction toward all that is highest in thought and life.”

The Rev. Joseph E. Roy, D.D., Secretary of The American Missionary Association, who had formerly as Field Superintendent of The Congrega-

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

tional Home Missionary Society been closely acquainted with Dr. Ward's work in Dakota, in a published letter said: "Rarely has it been given to a man, in so short a time as a couple of decades, to build himself into a commonwealth. . . . The first men are the historic men. Hereafter, whatever line of historical investigation may be run up in this state it will find the name of Joseph Ward associated therewith. And, as the years go by, the importance of those formative influences will be magnified. This man touched all the leading men of the state, governors, legislators, federal officers, public-spirited citizens. 'Seest thou a man diligent in his business, he shall stand before kings: he shall not stand before mean men.' No more conspicuous example can be found of the missionary becoming a constituent factor in commonwealth-building."

Miss Frances E. Willard, President of The National Women's Christian Temperance Union, in a characteristic letter to Mrs. Ward, recalling a recent visit at the Ward home, said: "I can see him so plainly, especially as we sat at Sunday dinner on that pleasant last day of our visit, and he was so full of 'gay wisdom,' brotherly kindness and good will. Somehow, 'I cannot make him *dead*.' Nay, he is anything but *that*. He is intensely, vividly, vigorously *alive*! Blessed brotherly Heart!"

Mrs. Frances D. Wilder, Treasurer of the North China Mission of The American Board at Peking, China, a resident of Dakota in early days and for a time Preceptress at the College, in a recent let-

## CONCLUSION

ter says: "With high ideals for Church and College, City and State, he was always hopeful, expecting to see them realized in the course of time. He was indomitable in purpose, persistent in faith, a lover of mankind, sincere, devoted, unselfish, triumphant over bodily weakness, always rejoicing in the truth. His gentleness made him great; it was the gentleness of Christ, full of sweetness and strength. The heritage of such a life is worth more to the sons and daughters of his adopted state than all the wealth of its fertile prairies and richest mines."

From an extended editorial in "The Andover Review" of January, 1890, written by Professor J. W. Churchill, of Andover Seminary, a few sentences may be quoted. "The life and service of President Ward receive distinction through his relation to religion, education, and high citizenship as fundamental elements in the building of the new West. His true position is among the moral founders of states . . . . Christian as he was in every pulse of his being, he believed in the claim of Christianity to pervade every province of human affairs. In his view Christian morality was the only stable basis upon which a commonwealth can be reared. . . . . Without deprecating the influence of other good men in the state, it is safe to say that during the last twenty years he has been the strongest moral force in the Territory of Dakota. . . . He was a man of ideas: but he made no pretence of being a guide in political or economic theories, or in matters of merely speculative opinion; his

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

thought was pre-eminently practical and executive thought. It was also constructive and originating thought; wherever he was placed he instinctively organized. He was a discerner of character and rarely made mistakes in his choice of lieutenants. Being full of 'mother wit,' he was generally equal to emergencies as they arose, and never seemed to be at his wit's end; he could drive a nail where it was needed and negotiate a city loan. He had the insight of his clear-headed judgment. He saw the forces that control the present; he had a sense of the tendency of things in the political and religious world. Naturally he caught and was controlled by the progressive spirit. . . . Lying close to the deep seriousness of his purposes was a rich fund of humor. The faults and foibles of men did not irritate him. His was a tolerant spirit, and could discriminate between opinions and the men who held them. He enjoyed a 'character,' liked a good story, could tell one and had many to tell. . . . Children instinctively ran to his arms . . . . His unaffected delight in the beautiful—in nature and art, in thought, character, and action—was one of the strongest elements of his nature. . . . One could not truly account for his peculiar influence if the central point of that power were omitted—his close, conscious union and friendship with the unseen Christ. It was this that penetrated, multiplied, and enhanced all other talents and faculties, and made him a fountain of spiritual influence. Of this central fellowship he spoke but little. No man was ever freer from

## CONCLUSION

cant. But his simplest conversation, his unguarded conduct of life, produced the impression of one living 'as seeing him who is invisible.' This was the secret of his serenity of temper amidst engrossing cares; the secret of his remarkable unselfishness. Living or dying he was the Lord's."

The Rev. Dan F. Bradley, D.D., of the Pilgrim Church, Cleveland, who was pastor of the Yankton Congregational Church at the time of Dr. Ward's death and for a time Acting President of the College, in a recent letter to the writer says: "Ward was a prophet and a poet. He gave the state the motto 'Under God the People Rule.' I know of no finer motto. . . . He saw a great state in the grass land of Dakota when other men predicted wilderness. He fought for state government when all the eastern men opposed it and headed it off in Congress. He stood for a personal piety which talked with God as with a friend—but his God was never a judge upon the bench or a sheriff serving a warrant. . . . Ward was one of the gigantic men who built the West by sheer personality and faith, a Pilgrim fit to be recorded in the 11th chapter of Hebrews. . . . He made friends among the noblest souls of his generation. Men like Duryea, Fairchild, Quint, Meredith, Goodwin, and C. F. Thwing came to Yankton in summer without pay to help him hold an institute of theology the last year of his life."

We have seen how Dr. Ward believed that the establishing of the College was the consummating work that God had called him to do. He

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

had conceived it, not as a separate thing, but as belonging essentially to all the rest. He believed profoundly that such an institution, inspired by the New England ideal of education, yet open to the needs and growth of the West, was a necessity both as a formative influence in the pioneer stage, and a perpetual source of Christian idealism and leadership in the future of the Commonwealth.

It was a work, as we have seen, begun and pushed forward on faith, in the face of difficulties that would have overwhelmed any but the strongest spirit, and a work laid down at last unfinished, still desperately insecure, but with the cry of "Victory" on the lips of the gallant soldier who was destined to "die without the sight."

In view of these circumstances it should here be noted that the years immediately following Dr. Ward's death brought "deliverance" to the College, in answer to his prayers and in justification of his faith. The Institution, at his death, with property valued at about \$110,000, mainly the accumulation of his labor, was staggering under a debt of \$35,000; and the loss of the strong leader who had hitherto borne so large a part of the burden was enough to fill the minds of many friends of the College with foreboding and dismay. It was the strength of Dr. Ward's invincible faith in that dark hour which rallied the courage of those who had been closest to him in the work. A new and strong appeal for funds was now made, developing presently into an or-

## CONCLUSION

ganized and powerful movement, under the direction of the Rev. W. B. D. Gray, assisted by Mrs. Ward and other strong helpers. The result of this effort, extending to the year 1895, was a total of over \$175,000 in cash and pledges to the College. This amount suffered considerable shrinkage in actual cash proceeds, and it is to be borne in mind that for a time after Dr. Ward's death debt had gone on increasing, and expenses had been heavier than ever before. Yet the movement resulted finally in clearing the Institution of debt, providing an additional large building, and making some start toward permanent endowment. In this period the "large gifts" for which Dr. Ward prayed so bravely began to come. Dr. D. K. Pearson, of Chicago, whose contributions to the College have amounted to \$130,000, was one of those who came to the rescue during these years. His willingness to take up the cause of Yankton College seems to have been mainly due to the fact that Dr. Ward had laid the matter before him previous to his death. "I will do something for Yankton College," Dr. Pearson had said. Among other large givers who were also enlisted during this period was Dr. E. K. Alden, at one time Secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions. Dr. Alden made a gift of \$10,000 at a most critical juncture, when the whole effort at clearing the debt and founding a permanent endowment threatened to end in failure. Other gifts by Dr. Alden made the total of his contributions amount to \$16,000. This

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

strong help by Dr. Alden has particular significance with reference to the Andover controversy and Dr. Ward's action at Des Moines already described. Dr. Alden, as Home Secretary of The American Board, had been the most powerful personal influence in the stand taken by the Prudential Committee against the Andover men and their adherents and sympathizers. It was under him that Dr. Ward and the College had suffered. This noble benefaction by Dr. Alden is not to be interpreted as a sign of relaxing views on the part of that strong Conservative leader, but rather as an instance of the magnanimity, characteristic of strong men on both sides of the controversy, which was able to rise above the difference of faction and join hands again in the forward movement of a common service.

Following the period of "deliverance," from 1895 to the present time, the Institution has been under the presidency of the Rev. Henry Kimball Warren, LL.D., whose energetic and progressive leadership has powerfully advanced the work and resources of the College during these seventeen years. Under the administration of President Warren other large givers have been added to the clientage of the Institution, including Mr. Andrew Carnegie, and quite recently Mr. James J. Hill. Further buildings have been added and the endowment fund increased to about \$240,000. To the list of large benefactors of the Institution there has been added still more recently the name of the late Judge Bartlett Tripp, of Yankton. Judge Tripp, who died December 8, 1911,

## CONCLUSION

made provision in his will by which a substantial residue of his large estate will pass eventually to the hands of the College. According to reasonable expectations the sum realized from this source will be the largest single benefaction in the history of the College, and the first gift of such amount to any philanthropic object by a citizen of the state. It would seem to be a conspicuous sign of the fulfilment of Dr. Ward's faith in the future of the College. Judge Tripp had been a friend and supporter of the Institution from the time when Joseph Ward first solicited the contributions of Yankton people for the College, and since then had always been the one to head the subscription list whenever the home town was called upon in a financial emergency. For many years he had served the Institution as Chairman of the Corporate Board and member of the Board of Trustees, and at all times his name as friend of the College had been a bulwark of strength in town and state. This last thought of Judge Tripp's in making provision for the future of the College was the fruit of thirty years of acquaintance, and a testimonial to the work which Joseph Ward had founded and which his successors had so strongly and faithfully carried on.

But greater than any endowment of money which the College has received or may receive is the endowment of "life" which Dr. Ward put into it. In remarkable degree his spirit lives on in the work of the Institution, an inspiration to officers, teachers and students, felt and acknowl-

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

edged by all. The anniversary of his birth, May 5, is observed by the College as Founder's Day, with exercises in commemoration of his life and work. It is believed that no better lesson can be taught to the students than that of the character and service of Joseph Ward.

At Commencement time, 1907, was observed the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of the College, with impressive exercises, addresses by distinguished speakers, and a general reunion of alumni and friends of the Institution from various parts of the country. Together with universal expression of love and honor for Dr. Ward called forth on that occasion, there was manifest also on every hand a tender and reverent affection for Mrs. Ward, then living with her daughter, Mrs. Edward Gray, in the old Ward home, but by reason of infirmity unable to be present at the anniversary exercises. Upon a spontaneous suggestion of the moment a singularly beautiful tribute was paid to her. Just as the academic procession was forming on College Hill to march down town to the Congregational Church where the Commencement was to be held, a quantity of flowers was sent for and quickly distributed along the line. Then, each one bearing a rose or carnation in his hand, the long procession, including students, alumni, trustees, friends of the College and distinguished guests of the Anniversary, marched on their way to Commencement by the detour of Mulberry Street, which led to the Ward home. There, on the veranda, with fear and trembling having been

## CONCLUSION

entreated thither, sat Mrs. Ward, surrounded by her daughter's family. Reverently, with uncovered heads, the long line crossed the lawn to where she was, and one by one in passing by laid the flowers in a heap at her feet.

Mrs. Ward died the following year, November 22, 1908. Her health had been precarious for some time past, and it is matter for congratulation that she lived to see the prosperous rounding out of twenty-five years in the life of the College, for which she, with her husband, had so devotedly toiled and sacrificed and prayed. She was a woman great in her womanhood as he was in his manhood, and in wonderful measure the co-worker and sharer in all that he achieved. Her name should always be honored in connection with his in the appreciation of his life and work.

In 1910, at the great centennial anniversary of The American Board held in Boston, a noble tribute of honor was paid to Dr. Ward. For the decoration of the interior of the great hall of Tremont Temple, where the meetings were held, there had been inscribed on the walls the names of twenty-four eminent preachers, theologians, missionaries and educators of the denomination, covering three hundred years of Pilgrim history in America. Among the twenty-four, including such names as Jonathan Edwards, Henry Ward Beecher, Mary Lyon, Charles G. Finney, Mark Hopkins, and Timothy Dwight, was inscribed the name of Joseph Ward. That mark of honor, twenty-one years after his death, with which

## JOSEPH WARD OF DAKOTA

neither the College nor delegates from South Dakota had anything to do, is a reminder of how wide and deep an impression his life has made; and his enrollment, as at the hands of The American Board, among the heroes of the faith, is a happy sequel to those painful events of long ago which followed the meeting at Des Moines.



# COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

This book is due on the date indicated below, or at the expiration of a definite period after the date of borrowing, as provided by the library rules or by special arrangement with the Librarian in charge.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY



0035520736

938.3

W212

07805920

BRITTLE DO NOT  
PHOTOCOPY

